

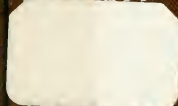
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FOR  
BIBLE CLASSES  
*AND PRIVATE STUDENTS*

— EXODUS —  
CHAP. XV-END.

BY  
*Prof. James Macgregor, D.D.*



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# Handbooks for Bible Classes and Private Students.

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REV. MARCUS DODS, D.D.,  
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# EXODUS,

WITH INTRODUCTION, COMMENTARY, AND  
SPECIAL NOTES, ETC.

BY

REV. JAMES MACGREGOR, D.D.,  
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EDINBURGH.

*PART II.*

*THE CONSECRATION.*

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# THE BOOK OF EXODUS.



## PART II.

### OF THE CONSECRATION.

THIS PART, like the first, has three heads—1st, the *approach* to Sinai, chaps. xv.—xviii. ; 2nd, the *covenanting* there, xix.—xxiv. ; 3rd, the *Tabernacle* building. A connected view of this part of the movement, in its connection with the geography of Sinai, is given in the Introduction (pp. 42–48). The episode of Jethro's visit may, in point of time, have extended into the period of the repose of Sinai. The historian, who is not merely a journalist or annalist, may have desired to give the whole about this visit in one view, and to pass from the important constitutional measure adopted on the suggestion of a man before proceeding to record the covenanting and the building, in which all went at the bidding of divine revelation.

Apart from Jethro's visit at the close of the Approach, and from the Song of salvation at the beginning of it, this portion of the history exhibits a full sample of *probation* or trial:—in connection with Israel's then condition of helpless wandering, there was probation of man (De. viii. 3), especially through the wonderful sustaining and forbearing goodness of God ; so that in effect there was probation, or trial of God the Redeemer (1 Co. x. 9) through man's disloyal discontent. The trial of man was especial through the supernatural gift of means of his life in the body,—the manna, and the water from the rock ; a life which God sweetened by healing the bitter waters ; and shielded, through the victory over Amalek the strong.

The discussions about routes to Sinai, and about particular places on the route, may mislead "the simple" among those whom they are intended to guide, by creating an impression that, since learned men differ about the places, there perhaps is an uncertainty about the history. The fact is, that there are more routes than one in Sinai, and nowhere else on earth, that would sufficiently meet the requirements of the history. And the questions about which the doctors differ have really to do with the certainty or the meaning of the teaching:—they are only questions about the one of several paths

CHAP. XV. I. **T**HEN sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; 2 the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord *is* my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he *is* my God, and I will prepare him an

that a man took on his way to church, or the one of several streets that a military procession took on its way to "the palace of the king."

**The Song of Moses** the servant of God, Re. xv. 3 (xv. 1-21). The expression of the Apocalypse may not imply that this song in Exodus is to be sung in heaven. By common consent of judges, it is the sublimest hymn that has been heard on earth. Its Mosaic authorship, though not intimated in the history, has been generally regarded as certain by those who believe the history. It has a distinct footing of its own, irrespectively of the authorship of Exodus. (1) The *language* is archaic, in a manner suggestive of early origin. (2) The *structure* of the composition, though exhibiting the type of Hebrew poetry, is less elaborate than the structure of such compositions in the following ages. (3) The *matter and spirit* of the song are such as might have been expected from a Moses, in the first rapture of adoring wonder, joy, and praise, when the great deliverance has been experienced this hour. (4) The *colouring* is that of an eye-witness, who still *sees* what he describes. And (5) it is really inconceivable that there should have been more than one man capable of producing this great song for the occasion.

The *art* of song may well have been learned by Moses in Egypt (the *gift* of song was never learned from man—Ps. xl. 3—*poeta nascitur* (Jn. i. 12)); and his Israelites must have so far been acquainted with it that they could be prepared for singing this song within the—say—two or three days of their stay at the point of Passage, before beginning their march through the wilderness. The women's part is illustrated by the Egyptian monuments. It consisted in the singing of a refrain, with accompaniment of instruments and appropriate bodily movement, in pauses of the song, which was sung by the men. **Miriam's refrain** (ver. 21), consisting of the opening words of the song, would thus come in at intervals: the placing of which can to us be only matter of conjecture. Thus at the close of ver. 13 there is a natural pause of transition from what is in substance retrospective to the second part of the song, which is distinctively prospective. And commentators have exercised *their* judgment (cp. 1 Co. ii. 15) in marking subdivisions within these divisions, which may have given so many occasions for the refrain, in pause of transition from one to another of them. The whole is in praise of Jehovah, on occasion of His delivering Israel, in a most wonderful mighty work of mercy and judgment, through the Red Sea.

1-13. **The first part** of the song, retrospective, begins, vers. 2-5, with expression of the direct spontaneous feeling occasioned by a first view of Jehovah's wonder in the actual destruction of the pursuers for the salvation of His people; and thence (vers. 6-13) passes on, still in view of that great work, to a more reflective representation of what is folded in its greatness. In this first part there are two incidental indications of contemporaneity of the composition with the event which was the occasion of it:—(1) The powerfully vivid description of what took place in the actual passage bears an aspect of being the utterance of *an eye-witness* of the tragedy of Egyptian experience in the sea. The great emphasis laid on the effect of Jehovah's victory relatively to "the gods," is what would be natural on the part of an

3 habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him. The  
 4 Lord *is* a man of war: the Lord *is* his name. Pharaoh's  
 chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea: his chosen  
 5 captains also are drowned in the Red Sea. The depths  
 have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.  
 6 Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power:  
 thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.  
 7 And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast over-  
 thrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth  
 8 thy wrath, *which* consumed them as stubble. And with the  
 blast of thy nostrils the waters were gathered together, the  
 floods stood upright as an heap, *and* the depths were con-  
 9 gealed in the heart of the sea. The enemy said, I will

author fresh from view of Egyptian idolatry, the most imposing in its outward grandeur, of temples and other monuments, that the world has ever seen. (2) The order of the names of peoples in vers. 13-15 (note).

1-5. *Unto the Lord.* This beginning of all song, for Israel and for mankind, is the keynote of the actual psalmody of Christendom through all ages; and the song is taken up in heaven, by the rational universe, eternally. *Hath triumphed gloriously*: the Heb. has here a peculiar power of simple repetition, as if,—My song is of Jehovah, glorious! glorious! *Rider*: not in saddle, but in chariot. *Throws*: flung, like a stone out of a sling (if a horse *spring* forward suddenly, the man in the chariot may—*experto crede*—be flung out as from a catapult). *The LORD* in ver. 2. The Heb. is *Jah*, here first occurring, poetical abbreviation for “Jehovah.” *Prepare Him an habitation*: rather, give Him glory. *My father's God*: response to His own word, iii. 6, 13, in making Himself known to Moses and to Israel. *Man of war* (Ps. xxiv. 8): anthropomorphism, peculiarly appropriate on this occasion of His triumph (xiv. 14, 30). He is on His way to be renowned as “the Lord of hosts” (“Jehovah of the armies”). *His name: detur digniori* (“the crown to the worthiest, said dying Alexander the Great”—cp. Re. v. 2, 4, 9); He now has won for Himself the “name” of Jehovah, that is, “the Only God, Living and True, Israel's Redeemer.” *His chosen captains* (under xiv. 7): cp. “his paladins” (Charlemagne's were lost at Roncesvalles). *Cast: hurled. Drowned: plunged*, so that they lay, not dead, but in the death agony, beneath the water. So, *as a stone* (in ver. 10, *as lead*): heavily laden with armour, they could not float for an instant.

6-10. *Wrath—stubble* (xiv. 24, 28): the *wrath* here is a “consuming fire” (2 Thess. ii. 8). *Sentest forth*: not simply, flashing through the cloud-like lightning, but directed like a sword (*right hand*, ver. 6). *Blast—nostrils* (“scattered by the breath of God”—said Professor Aytoun to his class, about the Armada). Here perhaps the expression is not metaphor of poetry; but (cp. ver. 10) resumes the historical description of *the strong east wind* (xiv. 21). Only, here the wind must have *turned*, to send back the waters which had stood as “an heap.” *Heap—congealed* (under xiv. 21 on *wall*). To make the water literally as *ice* here would be, not accurately scriptural, but unscripturally prosaic (the “ice” is in the commentator's head). *The enemy said*: the words here put into his mouth are not in the stately rhythm of the

pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand  
 10 shall destroy them. Thou didst blow with thy wind, the sea  
 11 covered them; they sank as lead in the mighty waters. Who  
 12 *is* like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who *is* like thee,  
 13 glorious in holiness, fearful *in* praises, doing wonders? Thou  
 stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them.  
 14 Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people *which* thou hast  
 redeemed: thou hast guided *them* in thy strength unto thy  
 holy habitation. The people shall hear, *and* be afraid:  
 sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina.

song as a whole, but as of eager utterance,—panting, gasping: a picture of breathless rage in pursuit. *Lust*: lit. soul, perhaps better,—soul's hunger, of hatred (and not only a thief's greed). *Destroy them*: marg. repossess, weakens the sense, by anticlimax, bringing the *greed* to the front again. *Blow—wind* (under ver. 8): the *wind* is the only second cause alleged here or in xiv.—*e.g.* no word of a tide.

11, 12. *Gods*, here specially appropriate (cp. xii. 12). It was over *the gods of Egypt* that this final triumph was achieved; and the strength of idolatry on earth was really broken for all time that morning (“fulfilled,” as set forth in Jn. xvi. 10, cp. 14). *Holiness*: becomes defined, as moral quality, by the moral law in the ark of the testimony (see *notes* in xxv., etc.). It is the attribute of His attributes (Ps. xxx. 4), even the loveliness of His love (Re. xv. 12). And hence, *fearful in praises*. Awe, “*the fear of the Lord*,” qualifying filial confidence of affection, is at the root of Bible religion. The sentimentalism of some songs which are sung in the worship of Him is unscriptural irreverence—really “twaddle” where that is profane (cp. Is. vi. 1-5). *Doing wonders*: = “Jehovah the Thaumaturgist;” so that Christians making light of miracle deny the Living God of Israel. The “mighty works” of God show Him in His terribleness, not only of resistless power, but of judicial resentment of moral evil:—witness the Red [Sea and the resurrection to final judgment. *The earth*: here, the sea—part of the telluric system—is represented as operative like an earthquake, instantly swallowing up.

13-16. *Hast led—hast guided*. The vision of the past here unfolds into vision of the future:—winter blossoms into summer (so that *spring* of new creation is here). That future is in the Covenant of Jehovah (He. xiii. 8), “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” How far the vision of the future is given by direct revelation, or how far the foresight is insight, we do not know. *Palestina*: a Greek form, would be better, *Philistia*. The Heb. is *Pēlāsheth*, “the Philistine country.” *N.B.* the order of the names of *peoples* (the word in ver. 14 is plur.)—*Philistines, Edom, Moab, Canaan*. It is another incidental proof of the contemporaneous authorship of the song—this is the order in which, *that day*—the peoples would rise to view of the future (see initial note). To Israel *on that day* (xiii. 17), the Philistines were nearest in view; as they have been avoided, what is next in view, on route from Sinai to Canaan on the east side, is *Edom* (which will covenant with Israel about a passæge through its territory); beyond which, northward, is

- 15 Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed ; the mighty men  
 of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them : all the  
 16 inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread  
 shall fall upon them : by the greatness of thine arm they  
 shall be *as* still as a stone ; till thy people pass over, O Lord,  
 17 till the people pass over, *which* thou hast purchased. Thou  
 shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine  
 inheritance, *in* the place, O Lord, *which* thou hast made for  
 thee to dwell in, *in* the Sanctuary, O Lord, *which* thy hands  
 18 have established. The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.  
 19 For the horse of Pharaoh went in with his chariots and with  
 his horsemen into the sea, and the Lord brought again the

*Moab* (which, seeking help of Balaam, will meet Israel in battle,—namely, the “man of war,” ver. 15); and finally, after the passage of the Jordan, comes *Canaan* (of the wars of Joshua). To one writing *after the conquest*, the order would be different: Philistia, if mentioned at all (it does not show in Joshua’s wars), would be named last. *Dukes* (Ge. xxxvi. 15, etc.) may appear to have, within the period of the forty years’ wandering, become superseded by one king (Nu. xx. 14);—another indication of contemporaneous authorship of the song. *Mighty men*: may be simply, men fit for war—and perhaps boastful—as they sometimes are, “thrasonical” Goliaths. *Melt* (cp. Josh. v. 1, and Pharaoh’s *hardness*). *A stone*: not the stone in I Sa. xxv. 37, but rather the *stone* or *lead*, here in vers. 5, 10: only, *dead* now, not only sinking. The future (there) foreseen in the song is involved in the (now accomplished) manifestation of Jehovah. That which in this forecast appears, “foreshortened,” as all at once accomplished, really extended over a generation of Joshua’s campaigning. The “seven nations” of Canaan, though from the outset under the influence of a “fear,” which was presentiment of doom, fought stoutly (cp. I Sa. iv.). Still Israel’s victory was won before the battle was begun (I Jn. v. 4). *Thy holy habitation* (ver. 13)—*people pass over*. These expressions have been arbitrarily made to mean, Jerusalem with its temple, reached long after Israel’s crossing Jordan. The expressions fairly admit of a less specific construction, in accordance with the condition of mind at the exodus time. The singer sees rejoicing, as Jehovah’s *habitation*, His dwelling with His people, which may be in Sinai; and correspondingly, the *passing over* is, their transition to that home, it may be, in the Passage of the Red Sea. Or the *habitation* may be, Canaan, the Rest, the predestined home, in view of this “day of espousals” (Jer. ii. 2).

17-21. Vers. 17, 18 are the conclusion of the song; ver. 19 is a resumption of the narrative. *The mountain*. Some regard this as a description of Palestine, which comparatively is a mountain land: cp. the “get them up” in i. 10. The mountainous aspect of Palestine must have been familiarly known to Moses, though he should never have seen it. No doubt Sinai, too, was a mountain land, a wonderful *sanctuary* of God’s building and (iii. 5) consecration. But the *inheritance* (I Pe. i. 3, 4) seems to look forward to Canaan. 18. End and effect of the whole work, “that God may be all in all,” Jehovah’s reigning (cp. I Co. xv. 27, 28). *For the horse—sea*.



waters of the sea upon them : but the children of Israel went on dry *land* in the midst of the sea.

- 20 And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand ; and all the women went out after her  
21 with timbrels and with dances. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously ; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

Therefore Israel sang : so in Re. xv. 3, etc. *Miriam*, we suppose to be the *sister* in ii. 4 : now a very aged woman,—of a long-lived family. Here she shows the Levitical fire, and no doubt a religious zeal ; but we come to learn afterwards (Nu. xii. 1, etc.) that if she was gold, it had need of fire, may be a “*strange fire*”—witness Nadab and Abihu her nephews. The beginning of a great career of woman, in Israel and in Christendom, is now in her as a *prophetess* (see the last named in Lu. ii. 36. Note on *Prophecy* in Intro. pp. 75–78). In Ge. xx. 7 we see prophecy apart from office, as arising out of personal intimacy with God, and resulting in mediation—still Abraham was a mediatorial person. In Samuel’s time the word “*seer*” had long been in use, where “*prophet*” came into use afterwards. The word “*prophet*,” “*prophecy*,” as representing authoritative communication of the mind of God by man, is in free use in the Pentateuch : which fits into the view, that the Pentateuch is of a primæval time, very long before Samuel’s. *Timbrel* (seen on monuments) is like “*tambourine*.” Its clangour went with the women’s voices into the refrain. Thus nothing was wanting to the full effectiveness of the utterance, by a nation newly born, of this magnificent song of redemption, on that first day of the history of nationality.

#### Exercise 31.

1. Ps. xc. is entitled “*a prayer of Moses the man of God.*” Suppose it to have been uttered on Pisgah, and specify the things which Moses may have in his view in the various parts of it, with reference (1) to Egypt, (2) to the wilderness, (3) to Canaan.
2. In Re. xv. there is given the Song of Moses and of the Lamb. (1) What Lamb was especially connected with the original Song of Moses, and how does it appear that this was Christ? (2) Take the veil off Moses’ face (2 Co. iii. 18), so as to show, in the heart of his original Song, *the thing* which God is praised for in this new Song in Re. xv.
3. The original Song of Moses exhibits the true type of Israelitish song, and Christians are Israel. For the composition or the criticism of a hymn, what does the Mosaic Song show as to (1) the *Person* who is the theme of Christian song? (2) *His works* which are to be in the song? (3) *His attributes* which are to be in it as appearing in those works?

NOTE on this first “*congregational*” service of song. The congregation is Israel (cp. the Song “*of Moses*,” Ps. xc.). 1. It here appears as the highest act of a nation’s homage to God, the King and Redeemer. So the Hebrews of the New Dispensation naturally regard (He. xiii. 5) “*the fruit of their lips giving thanks to His name*,” as offering “*sacrifice to God.*” This is a worthy conception. The notion of a musical performance, *for the gratification of the people*, is most unworthy ; cp. the criticism on a Unitarian prayer, “*one of the most eloquent prayers ever addressed to a Boston audience.*” So the canon of criticism here is, not, Does it please the people? but (Phi. ii. 8–10), Does it praise Christ? (*N.B.*—What Pliny found, in the worship of Bithynians, was a Hymn “*to Christ as God.*”) The song is the only part of public worship in which the congregation are

active. They now are priests on earth (cp. He. iv. 14)—the priests (1 Pe. ii. 5)—and this is *their* offering of sacrifice. But it is a "sacrifice to God." 2. Apparently even in the great excitement of those exodus days, the people must have practised the song previously, so far as to be able to join all together in the singing of it on the march. The only other personal exercise of theirs in worship, on those great days, that we are made to see in the history is their celebration of the Passover. The practice of sacred song, for the purpose of making the public offering of the congregational "sacrifice to God" as good as it can be made, is "a becoming thing." 3. Those who have charge of the words to be sung ought surely to be careful not to allow the service to be debased by expressions not becoming the praise of Him who is "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." Sentimental twaddle, sung by a congregation, is essentially carnalizing and paganizing. Fletcher of Saltoun, "the patriot," said, "Allow me to make the songs of a people, and I do not care who may make their laws." Lord Hailes said that Blind Harry's "Wallace" was "the Bible of the Scots." What sort of nation will our "Songs of Zion" make? Are they "of Zion"? Some of them have a look of Rome, and some of Racow.

**The March** (xv. 22-xvi. 36). Of this march the history does not allow us to think as if a compact army had been proceeding straight on to an objective point. Even the vast "army" of six hundred thousand must have moved in bodies not very firmly coherent in their connexion; and of the movement of the two millions we can think only as something like the progression of a season; though no doubt the Hebrew genius for organization, powerfully aided by external pressure of the circumstances, maintained a really vital connexion of headquarters at the resting-places with all Israel to the remotest extremities. It is evident that the history, which specifies only three resting-places in the first month of the movement, is not intended as an *itinerary*, to enable us to follow the Israelites from stage to stage. It is fitted only to show us, by selected samples of their action and of God's dealing with them, what suffices for enabling us thus far to comprehend the history of the institution of the kingdom of God here, within that "wonder-year" which, beginning with the Passover, is now so far on its way to a completion in the Tabernacle. Regarding the line of march, until the final movement inland to the mount of legislation (iii. 12), the expert witnesses are not fully agreed. That need not disconcert us, any more than if witnesses had not fully agreed as to the exact line of a ship's movement over the ocean. (See Introduction, pp. 42-45, and initial note to xv.) We may assume that the starting-point, represented by the song of Moses, was the spot now known as *Ayun Mousa*, or "Moses' well," some little distance from the Red Sea point of Passage. But from that starting-point there are several routes, with a general direction toward the central mount of meeting, on any one of which the movement may have taken place. And the changes on the face of the land, with uncertainty about the names of places, make determination of the question between those routes to some extent conjectural. But there seems to be a subsidence of disputations toward a settled opinion, that the *Elim* of our text is now represented by *Wady Ghurundel*, which gives us a central point upon the line of movement, about a mile and a half inland from the eastern side of the Red Sea. And in the important opinion of those who had charge of the Sinai Survey, the Wilderness of Sin was what, farther along the coast in the direction of the promontory Râs Mahommed, is now known as *El Markha*, a space of thirteen miles by three between the Red Sea and the mountains. The only other point specified in the history, Marah, is now credibly identified with the district or spot named *Howarah*, about thirty-six miles from Ayun Mousa, which, in an arid, broken country, would take three days of journeying of such a host, and which places us within six miles of Wady Ghurundel beyond. Here, again, the provisional or conjectural identification will amply suffice for *our* purpose, namely, to obtain a framework for the historical picture which is the real subject of our study.

- 22 So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea ; and they went out into the wilderness of Shur ; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water.
- 23 And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they *were* bitter : therefore the name of

The memorable march is made peculiarly memorable for all time by the beginning of those "murmurings," provocations, tempting God while being tried or proved by Him, through which especially it is that the exodus-Israel is instructive to the generations following (He. iii. iv. and in the Psalms). That same people, which sang the magnificent song of salvation so magnificently, was, as God here says (xv. 25, 26, xvi. 4), *proved*, or tested, as to the quality (De. viii. 3) of their adherence to Jehovah, whom they had owned and praised with such enthusiasm. The testing process began with their experiencing some of the inconveniences or hardships incidental to that condition of freedom into which the Lord had brought them. It was completed through His graciously bestowing upon them, in miracles, the gifts they really needed. And the result of the testing process, in both its forms, was to show that they, so wondrously favoured with the outward privileges of free men of the Lord, really in their heart of inward life were slaves. First, the true man is shown by his cheerful endurance of the difficulties and the distresses of the situation. Israel, at once beginning to murmur, thereby showed himself a petulant slave. Further, with reference to the gift of the manna, God imposed certain conditions, which could easily be complied with, as to the manner of their using His bounties. Conformity to such conditions, freely and with loyal heart, is in the very nature of a true free man (Ja. ii. 8). Israel, as soon as tried, showed that he had not in him this true nature of the new condition, but was really slavish in his heart of life ; by violation of the easy convictions, for no real reason, but apparently in the mere wanton insolence of a slave let loose. A Sybarite, murmuring because the rose leaf under his head is crumpled—that a ransomed son of God ! The selfish ungodliness on the part of professing Christians, which now is found not unfrequently murmuring or mutineering, under similar conditions, is no new thing. It is the leading feature of that beginning of emancipated Israel's probation in the wilderness. Saved from Pharaoh, they had to be saved from self. *Are there selfish Christians?* (See Mat. xxv. 28-46.)

1st, *To Elim* (xv. 22-27). The title of this subsection might be, *the trial by water*, and that of the greater subsection following, *the trial by bread*. At *Elim*, the destination of this first part of the movement, they probably rested three weeks. *Marah*, their first real resting-place, was reached apparently on the eighth day after their Passover observance in Egypt ; so that the *statute* and *ordinance* (ver. 25) to the murmurers was on that eighth day which completed the first Octave of days in their national existence. 22. *So*: ought to be, and (under i. 1): it is simply the historical *V'*. *Shur* (Ge. xvi. 7), also known (Nu. xxxiii. 6-8) as *the wilderness of Etham*. It included vaguely the region between Egypt and Palestine ; and its name of *Etham* may have been especially connected with its Egyptian "edge" (Nu. xxxiii. 6), where Etham was situated (cp. "Wimbledon Common," or "Braes o' Doune"). The *three days'* journey was the distance they had requested Pharaoh's leave to go into the wilderness. A host like theirs could not scatter in search of minor springs of water. 23. *Marah*: "bitterness," may have been an old name. The water found at Howarah (initial note to this section) still is brackish. A traveller, tasting it, said, "Marah" (meaning the Bible name) ; his Arab guide (understanding him to refer to the present



- 24 it was called Marah. And the people murmured against  
 25 Moses, saying, What shall we drink? And he cried unto the  
 Lord; and the Lord showed him a tree, *which* when he had  
 cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he  
 made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he  
 26 proved them, and said, If thou wilt diligently hearken to  
 the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is  
 right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments,  
 and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases  
 upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I  
*am* the Lord that healeth thee.
- 27 And they came to Elim, where *were* twelve wells of water,  
 and three score and ten palm trees: and they encamped  
 there by the waters.

quality) said, "Yes, *marah* it is" (bitter). 24. *Murmured*: N.B. the first separate action of this people now set free!—grumbling (cp. John Bull). *Moses* (cp. xvi. 7, 8). It was really against Jehovah (cp. Mat. x. 40). Their turning it against the helpless minister of the Lord was an aggravation of meanness in their mutineering. 25. No tree is known to have ever been in Sinai that was even supposed to have that virtue, of making bitter water sweet. This work was a pure and simple miracle. It would be peculiarly significant to an Israelite, accustomed to the sweet waters of the Nile, and having seen how *they* might be turned into a thing awful and revolting. Observe, that a merely natural history not only contradicts Moses, but leaves Israel in Egypt; it thus does not account for the thing in question, namely, Israel's freedom. *There He proved them*: tested them. The meaning is shown by ver. 26 to be instituted this mode of trying them. A *statute* (*choq*) has in general usage a more comprehensive meaning than ordinance (*mish-path*), as e.g. decree (general order) is more comprehensive than *judgment* (decision in a particular case). But here the words are simply combined for cumulative impressiveness. 26. This is a particular illustration of the general "covenant of works" under which Israel was to be kept in tenure of Canaan's temporal blessings. The Egyptians were remarkably healthy. The *diseases* here probably do not mean those which are historically known as "natural plagues" characteristic of Egypt. The reference, more probably, is an allusion to the Ten Plagues (see "plague" threatened in xxx. 13). The peculiar use of the word "diseases" here would thus be, to serve as a transition to the *healing*, of which the sweetening of the Marah water was a symbol. *Health* (Ex. xxiii. 25), restored life in its fulness of purity and strength, is a leading aspect of the result to man of redemption by God's grace (Ps. ciii. 3). Thus the N. T. word for Saviour, *Sōtēr*, is "Healer" (Germ. *der Heiland*); as also the Lat. *Salvator*; and our "holiness" is "wholeness"—haleness. 27. *Elim* ("terebinths" or "palm-trees"): Wady Ghurundel (initial note on this section). *Wells*: ought to be springs; *by the waters*, means, abundance of them. The place now supposed to be the ancient Elim has now springs, with some palm-trees and acacias and tamarisks. With this, of course, is associated correspondingly good pasturage. It must have been a "quiet resting-place" grateful to Israel—accustomed to rich well-watered

CHAP. XVI. 1. And they took their journey from Elim ; and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out  
 2 of the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the  
 3 wilderness. And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, *and* when we did eat bread to the full ! for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.  
 4 Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you ; and the people shall go out and gather

Goshen—after this first experience of “the wandering” in the parched desert.

2nd, *At Sin* (xvi.) (for the locality see initial note to this section). This more complicated *trial by bread* brought into view a more complicated baseness of Israel, such that Moses (ver. 20) was *wroth*. It is noteworthy that the Lord showed no such feeling ; the forbearance on His part is remarkable, considering that “the Holy One” is He to whom such baseness is most abhorrent.

1. *All the congregation*: there thus was a **mustering** of them from the whole region. *Between Elim and Sinai* (mount). Not necessarily in a straight line ; but, in the line of actual route. The *Sinai* here, the mount of legislation, is spoken of as a known mount. It now seems to be identified as the present *Jebel Mousa*, not the mount now known as Sinai. *Fifteenth day*: the *departure*, no doubt, dates from the Passover observance ; so that Israel as a nation is now exactly a month old. 2. (1) Unanimous, (2) now, against *both* the servants. 3. The pietism here is very shameful. Still more is the *spiritual choice* here manifested of the condition of a crouching slave on account of his bellyful ; showing what *their* “god” is (Phi. iii. 19). *Flesh-pots*, etc. Egypt was a land of plenty ; and the Israelites are nowhere said to have suffered stint of food there. *To kill*: with so large a host leaving Egypt in haste, there can hardly have been a full month’s provision of bread. There may to some have been a real natural danger of perishing of starvation. The more thoughtful, looking forward, might see an outlook very black. Though Sinai, before the barbarous destruction of trees, must have had far greater capabilities than at present for supporting man and beast, it probably never was capable of supporting two millions of human beings along with flocks and herds (see Introduction, pp. 43, 44). Israel brought much wealth from Egypt, witness the superabundance of free-will offerings for erection of the tabernacle. But there were no arrangements for purchase of commodities from surrounding peoples, with whom contact might at first be formidable to wealth-laden fugitives—as contact with a sword-fish is to a whale. There was occasion for grave solicitude or thoughtfulness :—but *murmuring*? the *slave’s* resort ! 4, 5. *Bread from heaven* (cp. Jn. vi. 31–33, etc.). The supernaturalism is the point here : hence, *raining* it (under ver. 8), sending it **from the sky**. The claim of Christ is, to be *the* heavenly bread, the

- a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they  
 5 will walk in my law, or no. And it shall come to pass, that  
 on the sixth day they shall prepare *that* which they bring in;  
 6 and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. And  
 Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At  
 even, then ye shall know that the Lord hath brought you out  
 7 from the land of Egypt. And in the morning, then ye shall  
 see the glory of the Lord; for that he heareth your murmur-  
 ings against the Lord: and what *are* we, that ye murmur  
 8 against us? And Moses said, *This shall be*, when the Lord  
 shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning  
 bread to the full; for that the Lord heareth your murmurings  
 which ye murmur against him; and what *are* we? your mur-  
 murings *are* not against us, but against the Lord.
- 9 And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congrega-  
 tion of the children of Israel, Come near before the Lord:  
 10 for he hath heard your murmurings. And it came to pass, as  
 Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of  
 Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold,  
 the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.
- 11, 12 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard  
 the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them,  
 saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye

substance, of which the manna was a shadow. But this shows that the *shadow* (the bodily food) was supernatural, as *He* is (the spiritual food). (See Introd. p. 80, on Israel's *witness* to the miracle.) The *proving* was to be through this supernatural thing. That is, it was to be tried whether (De. viii. 3) they would really trust their lives to God Almighty (1 Pe. iv. 19), in reliance simply on His word, in the absence of ordinary means of living. A further and more definite trial was to be (cp. xv. 25, 26) by means of His "ordinance," prescribing the manner of their using the gift. (1) On ordinary days there was to be (ver. 18) for them a day's provision bestowed for the day (cp. "our daily bread"). (2) For the Sabbath (ver. 22, etc.) there was to be a double portion bestowed on the sixth day. *A certain-day*: lit. day's maker for day. *Prove my law*: in De. viii. it is, "whether they will or will not have Him for their God." 6. *Even*: lit. between two evenings (under xii. 6, etc.). 7. *Glory*: this may be only, in the gift of the manna; but seems to mean, the sensible manifestation (cp. Jn. ii. 11) in ver. 10. 8. *Flesh*: in this history, as a rule, when there is record of the Lord's communication of a thing to Moses, there is not record of his delivering it to the people, and *vice versa*. Thus here, as there is mention of his intimation to the people about the flesh, there is no mention of his having received that from the Lord: it is assumed. *Against the Lord* (under xv. 25). 9, 10. *Come near—they behold* (cp. Zech. xii. 10): this was His only reproach. 11-13. The common *quail*, at that season, comes to the peninsula in great flocks across the Red Sea. Arriving faint with fatigue, and falling rather than lighting to

- shall be filled with bread ; and ye shall know that I *am* the  
 13 Lord your God. And it came to pass, that at even the quails  
 came up, and covered the camp ; and in the morning the  
 14 dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay  
 was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness *there*  
*lay* a small round thing, *as* small as the hoar frost on the  
 15 ground. And when the children of Israel saw *it*, they said  
 one to another, *It is* manna : for they wist not what it *was*.  
 And Moses said unto them, *This is* the bread which the Lord  
 hath given you to eat.  
 16 *This is* the thing which the Lord hath commanded, Gather  
 of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every  
 man, *according to* the number of your persons ; take ye every  
 man for *them* which *are* in his tents.  
 17 And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some  
 18 more, some less. And when they did mete *it* with an omer,  
 he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered

the ground, it is easily caught by the natives, who hold it in esteem as food. There was extraordinariness in the number now sent to Israel ; and the supernatural, making miracle, was further manifest in *the prediction*. Apparently the quail supply was for Israel not, so to speak, a staple or stated provision from heaven, but only an occasional luxury, which (Nu. xi.) might be a punishment. The manna was, in a sense, to be always relied on ("thy *bread* shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure"). 14, 15. *Manna*: Heb. *man*. In that part of the peninsula there is, about the beginning of May and onward, a natural gift of manna, resembling what now was seen upon the ground, either from the atmosphere in moist weather (cp. *rain* in ver. 4) or otherwise (a different kind) exuded from a sort of tamarisk tree. The manna which God sent to Israel was a really different thing in its nature : as appeared (1) from its being sent to Israel *wherever* they were in the peninsula, whereas the Sinai manna belongs only to this one spot ; (2) the heavenly manna was baked into *bread* ; the Sinai manna cannot be, but may be formed into a medicine or condiment like honey or candy ; (3) the *amount* of Sinai manna known to be sent at one season is immeasurably less than what was required for a real effectual provision to that whole people in a time of need. Regarding the *etymology* of the word, there is a question—a logomachy—as to which there is no real means of authoritative determination. (1) Some think that *man* is the form of the pronoun "what" in a question, "*What* is this?" (2) Our version is now corroborated by the discovery of an *Egyptian* word the same as *man* (for the thing) ; so that the Israelitish, "This is manna," represents their wondering bewilderment on seeing in *Sinai* something like *that* thing—the "manna"—they had known in Egypt (see under ver. 31). But *N.B.* the real point in the history is what is said by Moses:—whatever may be the connected fact in natural history, the essential fact here is, a *supernatural* gift of bread (like Christ). 16–21. *The thing*: the test here, under the "statute and ordinance" aforesaid (xv. 26). *The omer* (ver. 36) was about a pint and a half or two pints of our measure. The *supernatural*

little had no lack ; they gathered every man according to his  
 19 eating. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the  
 20 morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses ;  
 but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred  
 21 worms, and stank : and Moses was wroth with them. And  
 they gathered it every morning, every man according to his  
 eating : and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.  
 22 And it came to pass, *that* on the sixth day they gathered  
 twice as much bread, two omers for one *man* : and all the  
 23 rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he  
 said unto them, This *is that* which the Lord hath said, To-  
 morrow *is* the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord : bake

testing then appeared on ordinary days in two ways. (1) No matter how much or how little they took home, on measuring it they found not more nor less than an omer for every individual in a tent (a man who had been greedy would thus be quietly rebuked for unbelief). (2) And especially if they tried to hoard it they were rebuked by its corrupting (as when the sweet Nile was—to heathens—turned into a loathsome, frightful thing). The supernaturalism here was especially evinced by what took place on the seventh day. *Wroth* (under ver. 1). 22-30. (On the sacred number *seven*, see under xxiii. 10-13.) The abrupt incidental introduction of the *seventh day Sabbath* here, appears to imply an acquaintance on Israel's part with the **primæval divine institution**. (On Fourth Commandment, see xx. initial note.) There is no trace of a weekly Sabbath-keeping in the Egypt of the monuments. In the patriarchal age—witness Jacob's engagements with Laban—the number seven (under xxiii. 10-13) appears as a term of time. But there does not appear a formal Sabbath-keeping. It hardly *could* appear in the patriarchal condition, where there was no public worship, such as is now coming to be in Israel : on a sheep-farm, out of reach of church, the face of life on a Lord's day is not visibly much different from that on a common day. On the other hand, there are traces of a lingering tradition in the *memory* of the peoples though the observance was not among them. Hesiod says, "the eighth day is holy." Every eighth day is marked as "holy" in an ancient Chinese calendar, though *the reason* of that mark was forgotten in the time of Confucius. And there is a distinct recognition of the seven days' week, and even, it is said, there is the name of "Sabbath" in recently-discovered Babylonian inscriptions of a time before Abraham. *The rulers—told Moses*. Incidentally there here comes into view the existence of administrative organization. The "rulers" were the natural chiefs in the tribes (not, the "elders"). Apparently they did not simply come to report progress in the business manner acquired in Egypt ; but were wonder-stricken with there now being a *double* provision on this day. *What the Lord hath said*: this may mean, **not creating** the Sabbath constitution, but **appointing** (making "statute and ordained") the adoption of this institution into Israel's national life. *The rest of the holy Sabbath*: lit. a rest of an holy Sabbath. The Sabbath law was thus declared, beyond the fourth commandment, as a *specifically national* constitution on two *other* great occasions in this year (xxiii. 12 and xxxiv. 21, notes). *Unto the Lord*: like the redemption of the first-born, this consecra-



that which ye will bake *to-day*, and seethe that ye will seethe ;  
 24 the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses  
 bade ; and it did not stink, neither was there any worm  
 25 therein. And Moses said, Eat that *to-day* ; for *to-day is* a  
 sabbath unto the Lord : *to-day* ye shall not find it in the  
 26 field. Six days ye shall gather it ; but on the seventh day,  
*which is* the sabbath, in it there shall be none.

27 And it came to pass, *that* there went out *some* of the people  
 28 on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And  
 the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my  
 29 commandments and my laws ? See, for that the Lord hath  
 given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth  
 day the bread of two days : abide ye every man in his place ;  
 30 let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the  
 31 people rested on the seventh day. And the house of Israel  
 called the name thereof Manna : and it *was* like coriander  
 seed, white ; and the taste of it *was* like wafers *made* with  
 honey.

32 And Moses said, This *is* the thing which the Lord com-  
 mandeth, Fill an omer of it, to be kept for your generations ;  
 that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the  
 wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt.  
 33 And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer  
 full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be

tion of a portion means, a solemn acknowledgment of Jehovah as Lord of all : withholding the tribute in disowning the sovereignty. *Not find it* : He then showed, what always is the fact, that a man is no gainer by robbing God (Mal. iii. 8 and note under xxxiv. 24). *How long?* In every way they went on showing, when tested, that they were not true servants of God, but slaves let loose. Sabbath desecration was overt ungodliness. *Abide—place*. The conventional measure of a "Sabbath-day's journey" is supposed to have taken its origin here—the farthest distance from any part of the camp to the tabernacle. A sect of Jews, construing this injunction literally, made a man remain all through the day exactly on one spot without movement—a fatiguing "rest" for some ! *So the people rested* : observe this great institution sinking into the nation's life (Ps. i.), notwithstanding the perversity of the men of that day. *Manna* (under ver. 15) : the description of the supernatural manna here again shows that it was in appearance as the Sinai manna. Miracles of God are *in the style* of His natural works (not "monsters"). In this connexion (ver. 28) *commandments* has reference to the ordering of the manna, and *laws*, to the abiding constitution of the Sabbath. 32-36. *Fill an omer* (Introd. p. 91). On question whether this was literally *in* the ark, see note under xl. 20 : the process of the deposition for keeping, at the bidding of Moses, through Aaron, before the Lord, before the Testimony, is

34 kept for your generations. As the Lord commanded Moses,  
 35 so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept. And  
 the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they  
 came to a land inhabited: they did eat manna until they  
 36 came unto the borders of the land of Canaan. Now an omer  
*is* the tenth *part* of an ephah.

described with an impressive solemnity. Apparently it must afterwards have been placed *in* the Ark of the Testimony (He. ix. 4), along with the Moral Law on the Tables of Testimony, under the ("Mercy-seat") *Kappōreth*: a perpetual protestation on God's part of the supernatural sustentation of man's redemption life. (On the value of this as a *nation's evidence*, see Introd. p. 91.) This cannot have been done till after the completion of the Tabernacle. The statement in ver. 35, like the last *sentence* of Exodus, cannot have been written before Moses was at the close of his life. As compared with Josh. v. 12, there is a vagueness in its intimation of the point of time at which the manna ceased, which harmonizes with the view, that Exodus was written before that point was reached, but close upon it. Joshua makes the time to have been exactly *forty years*, excepting the month between the first Passover and the first giving of the manna. The word for *pot* occurs only here: the thing might be some sort of casket. It had disappeared from the ark (1 Ki. viii. 9) at the time of building Solomon's temple.

#### Exercise 32.

1. *Water.* (1) Give another case of miraculous gift of water. (2) Give three O. T. passages in which water represents the true spiritual life of man. (3) Give three N. T. passages, *ditto*.
2. *Bread.* (1) In the Sinai manna, show points of natural fitness to represent an extraordinary gift of bread from heaven. (2) In the process through which ordinary bread comes to us, show what physical connexion there is with the material heaven. (3) What is *the thing* which, according to Christ Himself, makes for man the blessedness of being filled with bread?
3. *The Sabbath.* (1) "To the Lord;" what does this show as to the statement, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath"? (2) Does the statement, "The Sabbath was made for man," show that it is for man to break? Illustrate from the case of a present of a watch from an elder brother (the Sabbath is a time-keeper).

NOTE on the effect produced on Israel by the new outward conditions.—We have seen the immediate effect to have been, the manifestation of a carnal slavishness in heart on the part of one emancipated into the state of freedom in sonship. That is a beacon (He. iii., iv.) of warning against reliance on our enjoyment of outward privileges; and a striking disproof, at the hand of the Israelites themselves, of the "theory" (Introduction, pp. 52, 53) that their peculiar history, of pure and lofty monotheism among polytheistic idolatrous "pollutions," may be accounted for by a peculiar natural religiousness in the seed of Abraham. But, further, it reminds us of the fact, that it may take a long time for leaven to leaven the lump. Though there should have been in the exodus of Israel a far larger proportion of real believers than there was in Sodom, yet it may have been very small: Caleb and Joshua must have been a very small proportion of that number which would have survived in the ordinary course of nature. And again, in an individual believer, the leaven of true life may have been but a very small propor-

CHAP. XVII. 1. And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the Lord, and pitched in Rephidim: and *there was* no water for the people  
2 to drink. Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and

tion of the whole "mass" of manhood. Bishop Selwyn (*Life*), speaking about Polynesian heathens converted to Christianity, holds it unreasonable to expect, that one who yesterday was a cannibal heathen shall to-day be all at once a completely rounded Christian gentleman. "It takes three generations to make a gentleman." Completely formed religious character may thus in a community be the slow work of generations. A man may come to *inherit* a complete framework of character, which is in itself of great value, though *in him* it should be only as a skeleton of Ezekiel's vision. The outward form of a society, with ordinances, now coming into existence in Israel, may thus be most precious, though not for a transmission of life, yet for the formative education of character (1 Pe. ii. 1-5).

3rd, **The battle** (xvii.). *Rephidim* we shall suppose to be *Wady Feiran*. It is (xix. 1) within one stage of Sinai; and on the march to it there were three stages (Nu. xxxiii. 12-14). Before thus striking into the heart of the central mountains, Israel had spent two Sabbaths at Sin on the coast. At Rephidim they suffered from thirst, whose capability of torture is represented by the only expression of physical suffering emitted by the Son of Man upon the Cross. Again they *mur-mured*, and now in such a manner that their great leader thought his life in peril from their rage. He laid the matter before God, who answered with the miracle of water from the rock of Horeb. That was their preparation for the battle. The *Amalekites*, their own kinsmen through Esau the brother of Jacob, appear to have been in commanding occupation of that region of the peninsula extending from the Egyptian settlements on the north-west to the southern border (Ge. xiv. 7) of Canaan. They, with Abrahamic governing faculty, may have organized many loose fragments of humankind into unity. It was (and is) the (Bedouin) habit in the region, at this spring season of the year, to migrate with their flocks from the plains to the mountains, for pasture in the approaching summer droughts. Amalek appear to have been awakened to jealousy by the invasion of Israel's millions, formidable as locusts. The most recent describer (1888) says that on the very field of battle there is what seems a perennial stream (Amalek's life). There was (ver. 9) a deliberate mustering concentration, and (De. xxv. 17, 18) a tactic of assailing Israel in the rear, where his laggard men were faint and weary. The battle was fiercely contested, extending through the day. It brought to the front Joshua, apparently always the stainless hero (under xxxiii. 11), then in his prime of life, the great future leader in Jehovah's war of conquest. And it gave occasion for the memorable illustration, through the prayer of Moses visibly prevailing, of the sovereignty of Jehovah as the Lord of Hosts. As for Amalek, the first of the nations to set themselves in open antagonism to His people and His cause, they were placed under doom of extirpation as a people,—a doom which, visibly descending in the times of Saul and David, was finally executed (1 Chron. iv. 43) by a party of Simeonites in the reign of Hezekiah. They are not named on Egyptian monuments; but are probably included in the description of *Mentu*, with whom the Egyptians before this time had been at frequent if not chronic war.

1. *According—commandment*: lit. upon the mouth—at the bidding. This, no doubt, was intimated (xiii. 21, 22) through the Pillar. *No—drink*: there is running water in W. Feiran, which occasionally runs dry (see initial note here). The tortures of thirst are aggravated by the tantalizing resemblance of wady courses to rivers; and in this case there may have been the added rage



said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the Lord? And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore *is* this *that* thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us, and our children, and our cattle, with thirst? And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not? Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go

of disappointment. *Chide*: the word here is stronger than that for simply *murmuring*;—mere whining complaint now giving place to assault of angry accusation, which, on the part of an excited selfish multitude, might (ver. 4) run into fatal excess. *Tempt*: try,—same word as that for *prove* in xv. 25 and xvi. 4. This “Meribah” tempting was (Ps. lxxxi. 7, 1 Co. x. 9, where a various reading is “the Lord”) typical of a series of “provocations” to Jehovah in their wilderness dealing with Him. *Our cattle*: these now come into view—a very important matter. Three millions of sheep were lost by drought not long ago in one colony of the British Empire. 4-7. *They—stone me*: lit. but a little and they stone me. First mention of this manner of putting to death. *Before the people*: here probably, not, at their head, but ahead of them,—so as to be out of reach of outrage. *Take—elders*: to be witnesses;—so the Apostles were “witnesses” of Christ’s works (Act. i. 21, 22). *The rod*: then, smote water with a plague; now, will smite rock for a blessing. *The rock*: with definite article. The rock may have been some remarkable rock known about. It is not now known, though a rock is *shown* as the one. *Horeb* (“parched”), so particularized, must have been one particular mountain (on that route, presumably). *Meribah*: chiding. *Massah*: temptation. These new names remained. The tradition about water following Israel through the wilderness from this rock has no foundation, and is in effect contradicted by Nu. xx. 11. What is said in 1 Co. x. 4 to have followed them is not the water, but “a spiritual rock” (Rev. Vers.), which “was Christ.” The curious heathen reproach against primitive Christians about *ass-worship* has been traced to an earlier reproach against Jews, apparently connected with a story about Moses being enabled to discover water through guidance of wild asses (Tacitus).

8-16. *Then came Amalek*: and Amalek came (initial note to this sub-

out, fight with Amalek : to-morrow I will stand on the top of  
 10 the hill, with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did  
 as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek : and  
 11 Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And  
 it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel  
 prevailed ; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed.  
 12 But Moses' hands *were* heavy ; and they took a stone, and  
 put *it* under him, and he sat thereon ; and Aaron and Hur  
 stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other  
 on the other side ; and his hands were steady until the going  
 13 down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his  
 14 people with the edge of the sword. And the Lord said unto  
 Moses, Write this *for* a memorial in a book, and rehearse *it*

section). 9. *Joshua* : his name at this time was *Hoshea*. He did not receive the new name till later (Nu. xiii. 16, 8). Exodus thus cannot have been written as it now stands before the closing part of Moses' life ; but the process then may have been only a revision for definitive transmission. Joshua, of the afterwards great tribe of Ephraim, was at this time forty-seven years old (in xxxiii. 11 he is made "a young man," which makes the historian an aged man?). *Choose out* : but a small proportion of the half-million could fight in a comparative gorge, though with some fighting ground. *The hill* : here, a somewhat lofty elevation, commanding the view. The traveller sees a choice of these. *Rod of God* : the suggestion that this was to be for signalling to the soldiers, has no warrant in Scripture, and seems intrinsically absurd—had the soldiers all telescopes, and eyes behind their heads? A marshal's baton is not for signalling. 10–12. *Hur*, probably the grandfather of Bezaleel, of Judah's tribe, is in this history the most highly honoured private person (xxiv. 14). He must have been a most rarely venerable man. The holding up of Moses' hands must have been in prayer. Merely holding up the hands for a protracted period is a muscular exercise trying to a youthful athlete ; and the tension of long-sustained, *real* prayer—"effectual, fervent, availing much"—is a strain upon spiritual force. The suggestion, that Aaron and Hur held up *alternately* a hand each, is perhaps a perilous extreme of prosaicalism. But the history commands our recognition of the fact as important, that in that crisis, most conspicuously, there was a whole day's toil of three aged men in holding up the fainting flesh of manhood in a particular attitude. It does not appear that the rod was held up in the hand or along with it. Perhaps the appeal was only for a Gerizim descent, not for an Ebal, though this had to come. What we see most clearly is the **Power of Prayer** : namely, the Omnipotence of God, commanded by the supplicating impotency of man (Mat. xvii. 20). At the same time, we know that it is an authorized (cp. Ps. ii. 2) *mediatorial* pleading, and can understand that the agony of its prevalency is directly *intercessory* (He. ix. 25 ; see the great Mosaic intercession, xxx. 14, xxxiii.) for those who have left Egypt at God's call.

14–16. Here there is a threefold memorial. 1. *Write—in a book* : the first mention of writing (book is seen in Ge. v. 1) : though it now is known (Introd.) that Moses and others must in Egypt have been quite familiar with

in the ears of Joshua ; for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi : for he said, Because the Lord hath sworn, *that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.*

writing in every manner of prose and verse. The lit. translation is, "in the Book;" from which it is an obvious suggestion that there was being kept (see Introd. pp. 57-63), in the business-like Egyptian manner, a record of important matter into which this great event was to be entered ; and thus indented on the mind of the new captain as a *nota bene* (cp. David's dying charge to Solomon his successor) affecting his future campaigns. Some other suggestions are roundabout ways of saying that the meaning is, "write this *in writing*"—a meaning which, in a divine revelation, has a look of platitude not commanding acceptance. But nothing will get rid of the essential fact, that here and now there is being prepared by Moses, on the spot and at the time, a record of the event, because it is important that the event should be remembered after this. The *act of writing* is here mentioned (as in xxiv. 4, 7 and xxiv. 27), because in this case the act of writing is *part of a solemnity*—of "protestation." That *reasoning* would make Moses write a Book of Exodus in his sleep. 2. *The Altar*: The first we see rising since Jacob's time. (See note on *Altar* under xxvii. 1-8.) The altar of Scripture always means unworthiness of man, and pardon and salvation from redeeming grace of God. Along with that general meaning we here see the *specialty* of the name, *Jehovah-nissi*: *Jehovah my banner*. So Constantine the Great, exercised about attempting to place Christianity on the throne of their heathen Roman Empire, saw, in a vision or dream, the form of the Christian Cross, with the inscription, *toutō niká*, "conquer by this" (cp. 1 Jn. v. 4). 3. *The memorial of doom upon Amalek*: The Heb. text of ver. 16 is doubtful. Our Received Version of the first clause is conjectural. And there is very weighty opinion in favour of the view, that the clause ought to read, "a hand is upon the throne of Jah." This would be the heathen hand of Amalek, forcibly opposing the sovereign purpose of Jehovah, "deforcing" His officers, and bringing upon themselves the last clause as an awful *Nemo me impune lacessit* (cp. Uzziah touching the ark of God).

### Exercise 33.

1. Who was the greatest captain of the tribe of Judah, and who the next to him?
2. (1) Name four heroes of the tribe of Benjamin. (2) Quote a song in praise of two of them. (3) Quote a sentiment of two of them on behalf of restraint of wrath.
3. Name a decisive battle in religious wars, (1) of England, (2) of Germany, (3) of Christendom.

NOTE on the **Strategics** of war against heathenism. The Chief Commander's plan for invasion of Canaan is spoken of in the Introd. and under xiii. 17-19 ; and the precursory work of God in sending "fear" into the heathen heart is the subject of a special note at the close of xxiii. To complete the view, we will glance at the "fulfilment" in the true Joshua (cp. He. iv. 8, and observe that "Jesus" is the same word as "Joshua"). The Plan of Campaign for the world's liberation from the tyranny of evil came completely into view after Christ's resur-

CHAP. XVIII. I. When Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses, and for Israel his people, *and* that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt; then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Zippo-

rection (Lu, xxiv. 44-46; Mat. xxviii. 18-20). (1) Old Testament prophecies, demonstrably emitted before the event, show that the future of the world's peoples had been seen and foreordained by Jehovah, the God of Israel. (2) The world was prepared for the propagation of "the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. xxiv. 14) "in all the world," "unto all nations," e.g. *Jerusalem* was the best centre upon earth for sending the "word of the kingdom," in *Hebrew, Greek, and Latin*, to mankind from the crucified "King of the Jews." And Rome, the great *road-maker*, had completed the task, to which she was called from the reeds of the Tiber, about the time of the cry, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord" (Is. xl, 1-6), for the consolation of humanity. (3) When all was thus ready, there came the "mighty rushing wind" of Pentecost (cp. under xviii. 23-26); and Christendom, a new creation, came into being at the sound of a word,

**The Episode of Jethro's visit** (xviii.). A true episode is an eddy, or side-stream belonging to the main-stream. And this visit, while further illustrating the relation of God's visible kingdom to what lies outside of it, affects not only the personal and the domestic history of the great legislator, but also, and for all time, the constitutional history of Israel. In the office of rule, this proposal of Jethro, for separation of the legislative from the judicial function, may be fairly described as original in the ancient world; and in relation to the vital interest of this people it certainly is most important, and well serves to prepare them for the Sinaitic legislation; as a ship may have her sails in preparation for a wind.

Regarding the person of this Jethro, and his relationship to Moses, see under iii. 1. The narrative of this visit is given so as to be rounded in completeness, as if it had been drawn up as a separate document, now inserted in the history (see Introd. p. 62). It thus does not exactly dovetail into what we have elsewhere learned about Zipporah, and may carry down the account of the visit to a period later than the commencement of the giving of the law (see initial note on the second part of Exodus—end of chap. xv.). The interview may have taken place after the victory over Amalek, either before the Sinai mount of meeting was reached, or—generalizing the meaning of "Horeb the mount of God"—in the earliest days of the Sinaitic repose. As that Sinai was reached (xix. 1) on the first day of the third month from the exodus departure, while (xvi. 1) Sin was reached on the fifteenth of the second month, and Israel remained at Sin over two Sabbaths, there remain for the transition from Sin to Sinai only about a week, of which, we have seen (initial note on preceding subsection), three must have been spent in the journeying to Meribah, while one was occupied with the battle; so that there can have been only two or three days between the battle and the people's reaching Sinai. Whether the whole time of the visit is to be placed within these two or three days, or is to be regarded as running into the initial days of the Sinaitic repose, is an indeterminate question, which plainly has nothing to do with the substantive meaning of the narrative.

I. *Father-in-law*: *chôthen*; which here probably means *brother-in-law* (see under iii. 1). *Heard*: in a region occupied by nomadic Shemites copious in leisure and in speech, it is matter of course that he should have heard, what then must have been filling the very air, the substance of the strange events as outlined here. The point of the matter as regards him is, that this is a great matter *for him*, and for other connections of Moses. And (ver. 11) he may, wishing to know truth about God, take a deep interest in the demonstration, which thus has been constituted, of the truth of the

3 rah, Moses' wife, after he had sent her back, and her two  
 4 sons; of which the name of the one *was* Gershom; for he  
 said, I have been an alien in a strange land: and the name  
 of the other *was* Eliezer; for the God of my father, *said he,*  
*was* mine help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh.  
 5 And Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his  
 wife unto Moses into the wilderness, where he encamped at  
 6 the mount of God: and he said unto Moses, I thy father-in-  
 law Jethro am come unto thee, and thy wife, and her two  
 sons with her.  
 7 And Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and did  
 obeisance, and kissed him; and they asked each other of  
 8 *their* welfare: and they came into the tent. And Moses told  
 his father-in-law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh and  
 to the Egyptians, for Israel's sake, *and* all the travail that had  
 come upon them by the way, and *how* the Lord delivered  
 9 them. And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the  
 Lord had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the  
 10 hand of the Egyptians. And Jethro said, Blessed *be* the  
 Lord, who hath delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians,

Mosaic religion, or of the religion of the Israelites. 2. *After—back*: lit. *after her dismissal*. The occasion referred to may have been that recorded in iv. 24-26. The word here for dismissal occurs in two other places (1 Ki. ix. 16; Mic. i. 14), where it seems to warrant the harsh construction naturally suggested by the present occurrence of it. 3, 4. *Gershom*: see under iv. 26. *Eliezer*,—"my God (is) help,"—we may suppose, is the one who was circumcised on that occasion, when Moses had obtained recent assurance that the Pharaoh whom he once had cause to fear was dead. 5. *The wilderness—mount of God*. The expressions here resemble those in iii. 1; and hence an air of indefiniteness, as if simply intimating that Jethro came over from Midian to the Sinaitic peninsula toward Horeb. The suggestion of a meeting at a spot fixed by previous appointment thus appears the opposite of happy. 6. *And he said*. Some have a strong feeling of impropriety in the first person here, so as to be disposed to change the Heb. text, in order to have, "they said," or, "some one said." No such reason warrants tampering with a text. And the text as it stands admits of the construction, that Jethro sent a message to that effect, as Zebedee's children said a thing through their mother. An "ancient version" containing the proposed emendation is likely to be an ancient (priggish) translator wishing to make Jethro not speak with "impropriety." 7. The Mosaic action here is that of duly receiving an honoured guest who is a great personage in that region. *They—welfare*: this rendering is rather weak. The literal meaning is, "They exchanged the *Peace be With You*." *The tent*: assuming the encampment (cp. "They went into the house"). 8. *Told*: here is recounted; gave the full particulars of the things Jethro had heard about in a general way. *Travail*: labour. 9-11. The use of the word LORD



and out of the hand of Pharaoh; who hath delivered the people  
 11 from under the hand of the Egyptians. Now I know that the  
 Lord *is* greater than all gods: for in the thing wherein they  
 12 dealt proudly *he was* above them. And Jethro, Moses'  
 father-in-law, took a burnt-offering and sacrifices for God: and  
 Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, to eat bread with  
 Moses' father-in-law before God.

13 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to  
 judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the  
 14 morning unto the evening. And when Moses' father-in-law  
 saw all that he did to the people, he said, What *is* this thing  
 that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone,  
 and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?  
 15 And Moses said unto his father-in-law, Because the people  
 16 come unto me to inquire of God. When they have a matter,  
 they come unto me; and I judge between one and another,  
 and I do make *them* know the statutes of God, and his laws.  
 17 And Moses' father-in-law said unto him, The thing that thou  
 18 doest *is* not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou,

(Jehovah) here, seems to make Jethro a sudden convert. (On the *religious* relationship of those kindred Shemites to the covenant people, see initial note on ii. 23-25.) *Now I—gods.* This might mean only, that Jehovah is the foremost of many gods. But it may mean, with Nebuchadnezzar, that *He* is the true God, Most High. *For in—was above them*; the *He was*, which is conjectural, is probably mistaken: a better meaning, and quite close to the original, is in the Revised Version, "Yea, in the thing wherein they dealt proudly against them,"—referring to Pharaoh's high-handed pursuit, and the event, "intending murder, he committed suicide." 12. The *sacrifices*, too, are (*Zěbčěk*) of the sin-offering kind. Jethro, sacrificing for the Israelites, is visibly admitted by them into *communion of religion*, that is, owned by them as a worshipper of the true God. Feasting upon the sacrifices was common. It was only in the exceptional case of holocaust, "whole burnt-offering," that the main part of the sacrifice was not made a feast. 13-16. *The morrow*: the day after the feast. *Sat—stood*: these were the attitudes, respectively, of the judge and of the parties in a case. *From—evening.* It is supposed that there may have been disputes about the spoils of Amalek. Many "cases" of dispute may have arisen in the ordinary commerce of life (as we can see in the civil laws, xxi.-xxiii.). How a chief magistrate could in a real sense administer justice to a whole people we cannot well understand, though it was a sort of conventional undertaking of "paternal government." Moses, seriously aiming at reality in the business, was on the way to kill himself. *Inquire of God.* This does not mean, consulting him as *an oracle*; but it probably means that they had a profound confidence in his wisdom as one intimate with God. The *statutes* have reference to particular practices or courses of action; the *laws*, more to general principles of active life. 17, 18. *Thou wilt . . . this people.* To be

- and this people that *is* with thee : for this thing *is* too heavy for thee ; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.
- 19 Harken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee : Be thou for the people to God-ward,
- 20 that thou mayest bring the causes unto God : and thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.
- 21 Moreover, thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness ; and place *such* over them, *to be* rulers of thousands, *and* rulers of
- 22 hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. And let them judge the people at all seasons : and it shall be, *that* every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge : so shall it be easier for thyself, and

kept standing all day waiting for judgment is, of course, wearing to the health. But "delay of judgment" is a most formidable evil to the whole community, threatening its vital interests, social and economical. "The law's delay" is by Hamlet placed among the things that make one think of suicide. 19, 20. Jethro's counsel is given in a truly winning as well as impressive manner. He assumes that Moses will be ruled in the matter only by what he thinks in accordance with the mind of God. His first suggestion here is, that Moses should substantially restrict *himself* to, in our phraseology, the *legislative* part of government. *God-ward* : in a position of mediation, on their behalf, looking into "the bosom of God," where, Hooker says, "Law hath her seat." A very noble conception of leadership. *Ordinances* in ver. 20: the same Heb. as for *statutes* in ver. 16. The *ways* are the general courses of prescribed duty, and the *works*, the particular things to be done along those courses. But Jethro's intention is only to say:—do not you deal with the detailed cases, but only with *prescribing* for the people's guidance, and for the settlement of cases. Then, for the *judicial* part of government, dealing with actual cases, follows the counsel in vers. 21, 22. Some have calculated, that with so many *kinds* of officials, the total number would be many thousands. Moses and Jethro knew quite well what they were about, and these alarmists do not know that. Probably the numerical division outlined by Jethro was familiar to those Shemites (cp. the Saxon "hundreds"), representing a natural constitution, of a patriarchal community expanding into a nation ; and now in Israel's case requiring only public sanction, which Moses gave, on the footing (De. i. 13, 15) of election by the people themselves. The "tens" might be ten "heads of households." The intervention of the "fifties" might perhaps be necessary to stop the multitude of small appeal cases from drowning the "hundreds." The number of cases going, by appeal from the "thousands," to Moses or any other chief magistrate, might be very small, and often of such a nature—"leading cases"—that the decision of them would be equivalent to a new act of legislation. The prescription of magistratical qualification in ver. 21 is memorably good : business ability, religious conscientiousness, veracity, disinterestedness—*O! si sic omnes!* To a community meekly organized under such administrators, laws from heaven would be as rain on the mown grass, or showers

- 23 they shall bear *the burden* with thee. If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee *so*, then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in  
 24 peace. So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father-in-law,  
 25 and did all that he had said. And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and  
 26 rulers of tens. And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.
- 27 And Moses let his father-in-law depart; and he went his way into his own land.

that water the earth. The word for *rulers*, here and in ver. 35, is that in i. 11 for *masters* (task-masters). It is a general expression for official authority. 23-26. Moses here is personally admirable in his open-minded accessibility to profitable suggestion. 27. *His own land*: this sends Jethro away to some considerable distance. Observe that Israel was in order, the best order that men could think of, as a ship is prepared for a favouring breeze, when there came (see note on the strategics at close of xvii.) as a mighty rushing wind (Act. ii.) the Sinaitic legislation, with its principles and precepts to fill the prepared sails.

#### Exercise 34.

1. Give an account of the history of Moses' family after this.
2. Write an account of the last recorded interview of Moses with Hobab.
3. Give the following cases of persons drawn towards God's kingdom through contact with Israel: (1) a general; (2) a widow; (3) an emperor.

NOTE on the natural basis for supernatural legislation.—The writer of Exodus would not insert this document merely on account of its personal connexion with Moses and other individuals. And, in fact, the visit served a most important purpose in preparing Israel for profiting by the laws from heaven; as a ploughed and fenced field is prepared for profiting by sunshine and rain, as well as by seed,—which in this case is “the word,” “the word of God,” “the word of the kingdom:” the three synoptical Gospels give these three expressions in their respective reports of Christ's explanation of the parable of the sower. Those who desire the supernatural legislation to take full effect ought to aim at having as good a natural basis as may be; such as an orderly, well-disciplined, well-informed mind. Christians therefore have a specifically Christian interest in the prosperity of the general culture of the community, and especially in the general education of the people. But the natural basis, without the supernatural legislation, is like that ploughed field left unsown. It will soon become a wasted soil, or be overrun with weeds. The immediate connections of Jethro may have been, at that juncture, perhaps externally better fitted in their free nomadic condition for taking on such organization as he had suggested than the Israelites were, newly come out of the semi-childhood of slavery. And in a very interesting obvious manner, they were “not far from the kingdom of God.” But from that point of seemingly close union, when their fortunes appeared blending with Israel's, as the head waters of two streams—Tigris and Euphrates—may be found interlacing (like twins in one cradle) near the watershed, they separate, and flow away from one another, as the Columbia river and the



Mississippi flow into two oceans which have a vast continent between them. And a visible cause is, that those other Shemites did not receive the supernatural legislation, the ordinances and the laws, the definite positive constitution. In Christendom it is a natural impossibility that such an experiment should now be witnessed. For there is no one of its peoples that has not the supernatural revelation in some real sense as part of its constitution. But a purely secular education approximates to the condition of that House to Let, which was "empty, swept, and garnished."

THE COVENANTING AT SINAI, Chaps. xix.-xxiv. — The giving of the Law is one of the greatest events in the history of the world. In character it corresponds to the great miracle of Pentecost, though its supposed date of the fiftieth day (*pentecost* means "fiftieth") is doubtful. And within the system of the Old Testament revelation of God for the life of man, "the law" is the proper name of that fundamental revelation, in respect of which Moses (De. xxxiv. 10) is the great original prophet, relatively to those who follow. "The prophets," down to John the Baptist (Mat. xi. 13), are only as the planetary stars reflecting a sun, or streams that issue from a fountain. In the Mosaic movement itself this is a culminating point (Ex. iii. 12) of meeting between heaven and earth, in which the emancipated people, elect of mankind, for the great redemptive purposes of God in the world, enter into covenant with Jehovah the Redeemer.

**The preparation (xix.).** The Israelites, through the winding gorge past Rephidim, reached that spot, at the heart of the wild granitic mountain system, which may well be regarded (iii. 5) as the Holy Place of a wonderful Sanctuary (xv. 17) of nature. Geographical discussions, which here have been extremely copious and confusing, have at last so far yielded light from smoke, as to give warrantable confidence in fixing on the place of Israel's camp, in front of that "mountain which might be touched," in the centre of the Sinaitic nucleus known as "Horeb, the mount of God." It is *Er Rahah*, strangely situated amid the crowding pressure of giant mountains contending for the narrow space; a really spacious plain, somewhat sloping from north to south, about two miles in length and half a mile in breadth. The people, encamped there, we may regard as a "congregation," seated in a church, and looking toward the pulpit at the southern extremity. The camp is surrounded by those awful mountains, as a roofless church, whose walls are far higher than the loftiest mountain in Britain, and which the congregation have entered, through the Rephidim and other gorges meeting there, as through the mysterious lobbies of a vast natural temple. If there be not room enough for the two millions on this Rahah plain, there is room for what overflow there may be, as on the right and the left sides of the body of a cruciform church, in the two minor plains of Deir and Leja, sloping into Rahah at its north end, so that Israelites in them will always be within sight of that southern extremity where we have placed the pulpit. Expert measurers have pronounced the accommodation sufficient; and (says Rawlinson) an eminent engineer has declared, that *there is no other spot on the face of the earth so well fitted for the purpose of a nation's assembling on a business to be transacted by means of sight and sound.*

The pure clear air of that region, in the middle months of summer, with the sharply defined forms of an "alpine" scenery, where there is nothing vague, is most favourable to distinctness of vision. And as for the transmission of sounds in the stillness of such an atmosphere of seclusion, we have long been familiar with hearing about the European Alps, how shepherds can converse with one

CHAP. XIX. I. In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came 2 they *into* the wilderness of Sinai. For they were departed from Rephidim, and were come *to* the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped

another across a valley where they are a mile or so apart. There was, however, to that Sinai "great congregation" no call for natural wonders of the human voice. That which it was necessary for the people to hear with intelligible distinctness could be easily conveyed to them, with such an organization as we have seen (xviii.), from Moses through their elders. And those grander sounds, which were as the Cathedral music, afterwards heard by Elijah there (1 Ki. xix.), giving sublime accompaniment of heaven to the "still small voice on earth," not only could easily reach them all, but in a sense have reached us. Of the utterance of the Ten Words by God Himself, who can speak?

That pulpit at the southern extremity we have supposed to be "the mount which might be touched." The south wall beyond it is *Jebel Mousa* ("Mount Moses"), which blends on the horizon with kindred peaks of that part of the Sinaitic group, some rising to 9000 feet above the sea. But the pulpit, *Râs Sûfsafeh*, is a promontory advancing north into the plain, so far in front of *Jebel Mousa* that the Israelites can see it, not only in prominent distinctness against the background of mountain wall, but above their level on the horizon; as a church close at hand seems to rise above the hill that is at some distance behind it. *Râs Sûfsafeh* bears this further resemblance to a pulpit, that it rises sheer perpendicular from the plain on which it looks north; so that an Israelite approaching to the base of it might almost feel as if it were overhanging him and threatening to fall upon him. In this respect it is one of the natural wonders even of Sinai. If there be no other such meeting-place on the face of the earth, there certainly is no other such pulpit as that on which rested the cloud-wrapped presence of Jehovah, and from which He spoke, with accompaniment of thunders, lightnings, and earthquake, and with signal trumpet, of no human maker, sounding long.

Correspondingly to the railed platform in front of a pulpit, the mountain was "bounded" or fenced, so that it might be actually touched, on the part of Israel, by no living thing but Moses, then acting (He. iii. 6) as the Servant-Mediator between God and man. There has been found, as if to make a natural platform, some little space forward from the base of *Sûfsafeh*, a diluvial depression, which has the effect of making the space between it and the rock into a natural platform, as if the lawn in front of a house were "bounded" by a low ha-ha fence. But this, if it showed, does not appear to have counted, on the great occasion; for (ver. 12) Moses was expressly commanded to place an artificial barrier between the people and that base, and to further guard it with a penalty of death for intrusion upon its sacredness.

I. *Month—day.* It is not absolutely certain that this means exactly the first day of the third month, but it is in the highest degree probable. *Wilderness of Sinai*, here, of course, is something more definite than Sinaitic peninsula. It has (ver. 2) to be, that portion of the wilderness which is adjacent to the Sinai mountain of legislation. 2. *For—Rephidim:* the *for* stands for *v'* (under i. 1). Rev. Vers. makes the vers. to run: "And when, . . . and were pitched . . . there Israel camped." Passing over the episode of xviii., the narrative of xvii. is here resumed. *Before the mount:* say confronting *Sûfsafeh* (see initial note here). There they entered into their  
FIRST NATIONAL COVENANT.

3 before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children  
4 of Israel; Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto  
5 myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto  
6 me above all people: for all the earth *is* mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These

1st, *Moses meets God* (3-6). 3. *Unto God*. Not, that he went to the summit, out of which the Lord called unto him. He went forward from the plain where the people were, and up on the mountain before them. This, it may be supposed, was by an appointment (cp. iii. 12), of which we have no account. *Saying*, the articulate speech of God, on this mountain, is a circumstance most memorably impressive. It is (ver. 6) not to be assumed that the people heard the words which are recorded as spoken to Moses. *Jacob—Israel*. The description, *house of Israel*, is of rare occurrence, except in Isaiah. The use of it here by Abraham's God, while it gives a certain tenderness of solemnity to the address, precisely connects, at the connecting link of settlement in Goshen, the Abrahamic patriarchy with the Israel of Egyptian sojourning:—it thus resumes all the past, from the time when first the Covenant promise was given. 4. *Ye—Egyptians*: what He has done in redeeming them (cp. xx. 2) is now a grand motive to their loyally serving Him; as Cromwell said, that he had got good wages beforehand. *Eagles' wings*: see the beautiful picture in De. xxxii. 11. The thing appears most vividly in the actual Passage of the Red Sea. The two aspects of the deliverance represented by the eagle are, its wonderfulness and its tenderness. *Unto myself*: the home (Ps. xci. 1, that had been waiting for them—Lu. xv. 11-24). 5. *Now therefore*: proposed "application of redemption" (cp. Ro. xii. 1). *If ye—indeed*: lit. if obeying ye obey: emphasis of iteration,—if you do it thoroughly, with strenuous true heart of loyalty. *My Covenant*. As "the mystery" of God's pleasure includes "mysteries," so His Covenant regarding Israel is a great complex whole, presenting various aspects of covenanting (He. i. 1). Here, from the connexion, especially with what follows, we understand that it has a special reference to Israel's occupation of Canaan, and all that is folded in the enjoyment of that Rest. *Keeping* the Covenant, on their part, abiding on the footing of it, is constituted by their continued compliance with the terms of it, conformity to the conditions of it, discharge of the obligations arising from its nature or prescriptions. Israel, now formally called into covenant, is advanced from the childish condition to the dignity of acknowledged maturity of manhood, invested with the *toga virilis* of nationality. *A peculiar people* (1 Pe. ii. 9). This distinctively Biblical expression implies, to begin with, that the people is very precious (Is. xliii. 4). But especially it means, that this is the people which is distinctively God's own (Ex. iv. 22, 23). *For all the earth is mine*. Hence the significance of *peculiar*. Victoria, if she be empress of India and the Colonies, is the Queen of England in a manner quite distinct. And a king, though his children be his subjects, has no other subjects that are his own as his children are his own. 6. *A kingdom of*

are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

- 7 And Moses came, and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord  
8 commanded him. And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord.  
9 And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord.

*priests* (1 Pe. ii. 5; Re. i. 6). All Israelites are the priests (to be represented by Levites); and they are kingly as well as priestly in their standing. The motto of the Clan Gregor—*Is rioghail mo dhream*—"my race is kingly loyal"—is thus a seeming plagiarism. The Israelitish Covenanters are of mankind the nearest to God, with a liberty of access to Him that is the privilege of them alone. And, on the other hand, through the medium of their kingly priesthood, blessing (1 Pe. iii. 9) is to come from heaven to mankind. *An holy nation*. *Holiness* is here not mere outward separation (xx. 5, 6), but purity (cp. He. vii. 6; Phi. ii. 15) of heart and life; so that (Ps. cx. 3) the Redeemer's army, countless as the dew of the morning, are, in their holiness, beautiful bright as the dew in the sunrise (cp. Re. xxii. 3 and 1 Jn. iii. 2). The purity is the healthy outshining of that love which is "the fulfilling of the law," "keeping the commandments of God." And the collective community of those who are thus robed and crowned is *the nation, am laos*, of God (see on this "nation" and xxxiii. 14, 15, note) as if there were no other; mankind being otherwise (spiritually) but a confusedly heaped or scattered debris of humankind. *Unto—Israel*: it is through the elders

2nd, *He deals with Israel for God*. (7-9) cp. xxii. 27 and xxiv. 1-8, *the elders*, cp. *and all the people answered together*. The process seems to have been, that the elders laid the matter before the people separately, perhaps in small groups, until the whole community understood and acquiesced; and thereupon there was a solemn simultaneous intimation of acquiescence by the whole as with one voice. The intimation from such a multitude, though it should have been only by an *Amen!* or by a silent sign, must have had in its aspect a singular grandeur of impressiveness. *Before their faces*: our translators here, by retaining the literal form of a common Hebraism, bring to view what was emphatic in the actual process,—namely, a clear and distinct formality of transacting, as we say, "in black and white." *All that the Lord hath spoken*. In vers. 5, 6, there are no expressly specified acts of duty. The people by implication here bind themselves to accept the word of Jehovah as the rule of their life. *The Lord said—Moses told*. There thus was a coming and going on the mediator's part. *In a thick cloud*. As in the Pillar. He was to come thus to Moses, *that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee forever*. They might—like Paul's companions on occasion of the Damascus appearance to him—not catch the articulations, so as to know what was said to Moses; and yet recognise the sound, proceeding from the clouds, as that of an articulate



- 10 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and  
 sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their  
 11 clothes, and be ready against the third day : for the third day  
 the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon  
 12 Mount Sinai. And thou shalt set bounds unto the people  
 round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, *that ye go not*  
 up into the mount, or touch the border of it : whosoever  
 13 toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death : there shall  
 not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot  
 through ; whether *it be* beast or man, it shall not live : when  
 the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.  
 14 And Moses went down from the mount unto the people,  
 and sanctified the people ; and they washed their clothes.  
 15 And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day ;  
 come not at *your* wives.

voice, so as to know that God had spoken to Moses, and ever after believe in him as a prophet. Or, as in the case of the Ten Words, they might, to the same effect, of establishment of the authority of Moses in their minds, distinctly perceive the meaning of what was uttered by the voice from the cloud. The *thick cloud*, as a veiled presence of Jehovah, does not (cp. Mat. xvii. 5) necessarily imply any *peculiar* degree of impurity in the Israel that was there and then : but rather, represents the inaccessible majesty of God in His relation to all men always.

3rd, *The people's preparation for God's own spoken word* (10-15), cp. 1 Ti. i. 16. *The third day* here is emphasized, simply because *two days* are to be given to sanctification. *Wash their clothes* : this and other things were significant of a special preparation of the heart (cp. He. x. 22). In Egypt such purifications went to an extreme, which tended to make a religion of the form. What is now prescribed to Israel is within the limits of obvious natural decency correspondingly to the occasion, so as to keep clear of falsetto unreality. *Washing* the clothes is a prescription suitable to all men, who may not have means of procuring new clothes for such an occasion. (A man in his working-clothes newly washed is a very pleasing sight at church.) *Will come down*. This, *in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai*, would be, an appearance of the *thick cloud* (ver. 9), perhaps at first (ver. 16), only on the summit of *Stihsafeh*, but (vers. 17, 18) when the decisive moment of the meeting came, enveloping that whole southern Sinai mount as with a "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." *Set bounds* (see initial note). The extreme severity of the "fencing" here, the mercilessness of the vindication of the sacredness of God's mountain (cp. Ps. xv. 1, etc.), is fitted (cp. xx. 20) to create and sustain that moral and spiritual feeling (Hab. ii. 20) of reverential awe toward divinity, holy in majesty ; that "fear of God" which is the wholesome fountain of just thought and seemly action. The brutish profaneness of irreverence is strikingly illustrated by the prohibition *to touch* the criminal :—he thus is not only as a beast in his death, but such that it would be *pollution to touch* him—even with a death-stroke of judicial resentment. Here is Jehovah's *Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo*. This might empty of their "vulgar" selves those who go to meet the Redeemer (Re. iii. 17, 18).

16 And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so  
 17 that all the people that *was* in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with  
 18 God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire; and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked  
 19 greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God  
 20 answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon

*The trumpet*: the Heb. word here represents, not the straight trumpet, but the cornet ("horn" like) form, which at that time in Sinai may have existed as the ram's horn "blower." But in connexion with this great occasion, the actual trumpet is known to us only from the sound of it; which was not only loud but *long*-protracted, as if outsounding the heavenly thunders into silence. That was the true muezzin, call to prayer, and signal for attention to the word of God. Only once again can the universe hear anything like that sound,—in the "voice of the archangel, and the trump of God." To those who listened, tremblingly expectant, the mysteriousness in the question—what is the trumpet, articulation of God amid a chaos of natural noises—may have added to the awe with which, as if in a dissolving world, they waited for His word. The seeming contradiction of ver. 13 to ver. 12 is explained thus:—(1) the "going up" in ver. 13 is only, going on to the platform, outside of the barrier; (2) that it was *permitted* when the trumpet sounded *long* (this particular sound of the trumpet being a signal, of permission now, to approach so far).

4th, *Jehovah's coming to speak* (16-25). 16. *Third—morning*: comp. resurrection of Christ. 17. A movement forward, as if to do reverence to the king (Ps. ii. 12). *They stood*: the individuals who so stood would be the foremost of the approaching mass. *At the nether part*: at the "foot." Not (vers. 12, 21) *on* the mount:—if Sûsateh was this mount (a perpendicular cliff), they *could* not place themselves "on" it. The foremost came "on to" the foot of the mount (base "platform," as near as the "barrier" or "bound" permitted, ver. 12). 18. This (as in Ps. civ. 32 and cxliv. 3) is not like the gradual overspreading of Sinai with the obscurity of a storm that moves along earth's face: it is a sudden taking possession, as if in a moment, of the touch upon Sinai by the Lord's descending:—the whole mountain system was completely dominated (as if) by volcanic eruption, of smoke-darkened flame. At ver. 16, where the people are only being summoned to make ready for the meeting, the mustering terrors appear as if held in some measure of restraint. But in ver. 18, where they have come to the very point of meeting, the terrors are let loose, as when Æolus opens his cave to emission of the storms. At ver. 19 that awful sound of trumpet appears to command a certain stillness,—physical nature subdued into silence; such that now it is possible for spoken utterance to be comprehended, like the captain's orders in a hurricane at sea,—God responding wonderfully,

Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the Lord called Moses *up* to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

21 And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of

22 them perish. And let the priests also, which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves, lest the Lord break forth upon

23 them. And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set

24 bounds about the mount, and sanctify it. And the Lord said unto him, Away, get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou, and Aaron with thee: but let not the priests and the

25 people break through to come up unto the Lord, lest he break forth upon them. So Moses went down unto the people, and spake unto them.

heard clear and articulate, "deep answering unto deep." At ver. 20, *the top of the mount*, to which Moses now is called, is apparently distinct from (or in, or on) *Mount Sinai*, to which Jehovah has descended; as ("Olivet" from "Bethany," Act. i. 12, cp. Lu. xxiv. 50) a particular spot is distinct from the whole ground. This again is suggestive of one particular spot—*e.g.* top of Sûfsafeh—in which the manifested "presence" was concentrated, as (later) in the Holy of Holies, and (earlier) in the burning bush (so in xx. 21). The charge in ver. 21 is powerfully significant: especially of Jehovah's jealous regard for the sacredness of His awful manifested presence; but also of the capabilities of brutishly carnal audacity that are in man. The *breaking through unto the Lord to gaze*, brings to view profane curiosity, in a densely thronging mass: those in front are not only drawn forward by their own profanity of lust, but impelled by those behind, thrust into breaking through the sacred bound, and thus opening a floodgate of violated majesty in wrath upon them all. 22. There was at this time in Israel no official priesthood. The acting priests (ver. 6) on this occasion would be those having a naturally representative headship, like Noah and Job, or men deputed for the occasion from the "kingdom of priests." Here the point is, that they are not to presume upon their office entitling them to a profane familiarity with God (cp. a minister thoughtlessly "doing duty"). 23. The charge regarding the priest brings to a climax the demonstration of the sheer impossibility of the people's meeting God,—while yet the meeting *has* to be. The solution of the problem is in ver. 24. *Mediation*; and still the point holds firm, for both priest and people, on peril of their lives, to remember that—

*Great fear, in meeting of His saints,  
Is due unto the Lord.*

#### Exercise 35.

1. "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." In *His* wonderful works, point out illustration of *contrast* to the Sinaitic wonders, relatively (1) to elemental storm, (2) to the voice of God, and (3) to the life and death of man.
2. Christ will say, "Depart from me, ye cursed." (1) Is there anything in His death corresponding in its nature to such a "work of the law"? (2) Any-

thing in His baptismal profession? (3) Anything in His character as the Son of God? (Say, in every case, what thing.)

3. Describe in your own way, (1) the route from the Red Sea to Sinai, (2) the situation there.

NOTE on the balance of miracle and doctrine, here and elsewhere.—In Egypt, while there is doctrine, miracles are the great thing (Ps. ciii. 7). In the apostolic ministry, where there are miracles, doctrine is the great thing. In the personal ministry of Christ there seems to be an equipoise; while "His word was with power," and "never man spake like" Him; on the other hand, His "works" were unparalleled (Jn. xv. 24, cp. vii. 31), and they were within the framework of the stupendous miracles of His resurrection and of the Incarnation. At Sinai, too, there seems to be equipoise: the history is equally of revelation and of demonstration; and while the revelation is of supernatural redemption, the redemption itself is revelation of the Living God, and the law of nature is written supernaturally, on "fleshy tables" as well as on stone.

**The Ten Words** of Moral Law (xx.). This name (xxxiv. 28 and De. iv. 13, x. 4), in Greek, *Decalogue*, is in our common use made "The Ten Commandments." "Commandments" is the New Testament name for them (Mat. xix. 17; Ro. xiii. 9); (*not* an O.T. name for them), and the Heb. word for "words" in this name sometimes has the meaning of commandments or prescriptions. They are collectively spoken of under a variety of other names,—such are *the law, the covenant, the two Tables of the Testimony*. But the name which the Old Testament most frequently gives them is, *The Testimony*. This collection of them is distinguished from all other legislative forms of words in these respects:—(1) They were spoken by the voice of God; (2) They were written by His finger on tables of stone, and by His authority were kept in the inside of the Ark of the Covenant; and (3) The law which they declare was originally written by Him on the heart of man as first created, and is to be new-written by Him on the heart of men in the new creation of redeeming grace.

What this means is, that they are distinctively MORAL LAW: or, declaration of duty that arises, not from changeable circumstances in the condition of men, but from the unchanging nature of the constitution of man in his relations to God and his neighbour. Theologians (Shorter Cat.) have found it possible to include, under the various heads of duty represented by the Ten Words, the whole natural duty of man. Among those who believe in the universal and permanent divine obligation of these Commandments, there will hardly be any serious difference of opinion as to their exhaustiveness in intimation of heads of human duty. And those who do not see that they are completely exhaustive may be allowed without disturbance to discover duties of natural obligation that cannot be brought under any category of the Decalogue. The really serious question is, not regarding their extent of domain, but regarding the nature of their dominion:—are they of the nature of moral law, such as to be of permanent universal obligation? ¶

That they are distinctively moral law, such as to bind all men at all times, and not like the Ceremonial Law (only for Jews before Christ), or the Civil Law (only for Romans under the empire), has been the opinion of the great mass of men believing in the Bible religion under the New Testament as well as under the Old. And this opinion is founded, not only on the peculiar manner in which the Ten Words were delivered and preserved by God, and spoken of by Christ and His Apostles, but also on the character of the Commandments within themselves. The subject of them is natural duty, arising, not from especial circumstances of place and time, such as those of the Jews in Palestine or of the Romans in the first five centuries of our era, but from the nature of man in his unchanging relations to his fellow-men and to God, substantially the same in all generations wherever the sun shines.

That in the Fourth Commandment (on "the Sabbath," see under xvi. 10-13)



there is a positive element as well as a moral substance, is fully admitted. It is admitted that the law of nature does not require that the day of rest should be at the close of the week ; but that the transposition of it to the beginning of the week leaves the precept as well fitted as before to work in the constitution of man, through the continually recurring period of the week of seven days. And of those who maintain the substantial morality or naturalness of the precept, there are some who think that the seven-days period is only positive, not natural ; though obligatory, because expressly prescribed by God. According to their view, the proper substance of the precept, arising out of the nature of man's constitution, is only the consecration to religious rest and worship of some stated portion of our time whether it be one day in seven, or whatever it may be found to be. But as to the essential question now in our view, of the morality of the Decalogue, or the permanent universal obligation of its precepts, all classes of Christians, Eastern and Western, Protestant and Romish, have concurred with the Jews, both ancient and modern, in recognising the Decalogue as a code of natural laws, and in maintaining the perpetual moral obligation of the Ten Commandments in general and of the Fourth Commandment in particular.

In Scripture there are two editions of the Decalogue (see *Introd.* p. 90, *Tables of the Law*, and relative notes under xxxi., xxxiii., and xxxiv.), both by Moses as editor or reporter. The one in Deut. v. has some material variations from the one in our text ; in particular, in the reason annexed to the Fourth Commandment, and in the order in which *house* and *wife* are placed in the Tenth. The generally received view as to this matter among believing students of the Bible is, that the Exodus edition is the original one, which God wrote on the stone tables ; and that in the Deuteronomy edition Moses used freedoms, which would not cause the meaning of the precepts to be misapprehended, and which would not occasion any doubt as to the divine authority of the law on the part of those who believed that Moses himself received it from the hand of God :—men who *knew* that the Exodus edition was the first, would not be thrown into any doubt as to the question which was the first by hearing the Deuteronomy edition. Some hold that the Deuteronomy edition is the original, and that the Mosaic liberties were taken with the Exodus edition. This, it may be pleaded, would not mislead men ; since, in the same way, the (previously given) Deuteronomy words would prevent them from falling into mistakes, and the two Tables were in the ark for final appeal in case of need (but who was allowed to *see* what was in the ark?). Yet a third opinion is, that neither of those two editions gives what God wrote on the Tables ; but that—as in the case of other tables of laws intended for the memory of peoples—He wrote only some short “ words,” like those in the Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth “ Commandments ;” and that the amplifications beyond this, as in the Second and the Fourth, and the details beyond “ covet ” in the Tenth, are only explanations of the Law,—which no doubt are binding as having the legislator's authority, like the “ Interpretation Clause ” of an Act of Parliament. This variety of opinion as to the exact wording of the Decalogue in its original utterance and writing by God, does not necessarily imply a difference of opinion as to the substantive character of the precepts. It may mean only a difference regarding the way and manner in which they came to be in Scripture as they now are. But, in fact, men's views of this matter have sometimes been regardless of the authority of Scripture, our only source of real information about the matter.

Another question is, how the Ten Words are to be classified or grouped. This is not determined by express authority of Scripture. While intimating that the Tables were two, it does not say what part of the Decalogue was written on the one Table and what on the other. And though we had known what was on each Table, that would not have conclusively shown us what is the true division of the code : it might only mean, that so much of it was on a second Table because there was not room for it on the first. And, in fact, the proposed divisions have arisen from the views which men have taken of the specific natures of the various

precepts, or of the distinctive characters of the duties prescribed in those precepts.

We shall here leave out of account the opinion of some, that "the preface to the Ten Commandments" (given in Ex. xx. 2) really is one of the "Ten Words." The question is, how to classify what follows into two groups making ten. Relatively to this question there is a twofold previous question as to the meaning of particular precepts. (1) Some slump into one commandment, against idolatry, what we have as the First Commandment (against having a false God) and the Second Commandment (against using images in worship of God). (2) Some break up our Tenth Commandment (against coveting) into two;—one, against coveting a neighbour's *wife*, and the other, against coveting his *house*, etc. This is made difficult for them by the fact that it is only in the Deuteronomy edition that the *wife* is placed before the *house*. In the Exodus edition the *house* is put first. This implies no disparagement of the wife; the law presumably means: Do not covet *the dwelling*, nor *anything that it contains*. What it contains may be more honourable than itself (as the ark was more venerable than the Tabernacle). This would make one law against coveting. If we split up the law into two, because a wife is different from a house, then we might split it up into six, because all the other things specified are different from both and from one another; or, indeed, into sixty, because there are sixty different kinds of things that may be coveted. The question about idolatry may seem only verbal. In fact it has been, for more than half the Christian world, a hinge of practical determination regarding the vitally important matter of worship, and, consequently, of the whole system of distinctively religious life among the peoples.

We will assume that our "first Commandment" and our "second" are two of the Ten Words, and that our "tenth" is only one of them. Some have proposed to make the divisions 3 and 7: the 3 being deemed a sacred number, in connexion with the constitution of the Godhead; and the 7 having a sacredness in connexion with the creatures in covenant relation to God. Others have regarded the law as consisting of two fives ("pentads"): correspondingly to the two hands, representing the totality of man's practical capability, summed up in the two pentads of fingers (see note on *thumb* under xxix. 20, and on *the number five* under xxvi. 10). This would place the law about parents on the same level with the four which directly refer to God; for which a justification is sought in the fact that parents and magistrates are, in respect of authority and title to reverence, an image of the sovereignty which is worshipped in God. The distribution with which we are most familiar, into four commandments directly regarding God, and six directly regarding man, proceeds upon what plainly is the fact on the face of the precepts themselves. In fact, the first four (as numbered by us) do refer directly to God as the Being to be worshipped;—(1) the *object* of the worship; (2) the *form* of it; (3) the *spirit* of it; (4) the *time* of it. And, in fact, the remaining six do not refer directly to God, but refer directly to man. But it is well to remember that this classification and numbering of the Ten Words is not expressly prescribed nor formally exemplified in Scripture.

Relatively to the Decalogue, "the two great commandments" (Mat. xxii. 35-40) do not, as has been foolishly imagined, supersede the morality of the old Law. They *are* the morality of the old Law as set forth "rightly" by a Jewish lawyer (Lu. x. 25) in answer to the question of Christ,—“What is written in the law? how readest thou?” When Christ says of them, that “on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Mat. xxii. 40), the meaning is, that they are the soul or spirit, without which a body is lifeless (Ro. xiii. 10), and ready to dissolve in corruption (Mat. xxiii. 27). They represent *the principle* of Bible morality; while the Ten Words are its code of ethical *precepts*. The precepts point the main heads of prescribed application of the principle. And the principle itself, in the terms of the two great commandments, is first declared, not by Christ in the new dispensation, but by Moses in the old (De. vi. 5; Lev. xix. 18). And if a body without a soul be a corpse, a soul without a body is

CHAP. XX. 1, 2. And God spake all these words, saying, I *am* the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of  
 3 Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no  
 4 other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any  
 graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven  
 above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water  
 5 under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them,  
 nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God *am* a jealous God,

a ghost. It is in the precept that the principle has a career, of peace like a river, and of righteousness like the waves of the sea. The two together constitute *the system* of Bible morality: like gravitation and the stars.

### Exercise 36.

1. Give other illustrations of a principle along with details making one whole system.
2. If the law be of nature, how can it be supernatural, and for what use?
3. Why should the Decalogue be spoken of as "The Testimony," "The Covenant"?

1. *God spake.* The employment of angels, referred to in connexion with the mediation of Moses by Stephen (Act. vii. 53) and by Paul (Ga. iii. 19), is not here alluded to. *All these:* down to the close of ver. 17, as appears from the change of person in ver. 18. 2. This (see initial note here) has by some been taken along with ver. 3 as part of the First Commandment. It no doubt has a special bearing on idolatry. But the principle of it, in accordance with (Ex. xix. 2-9) the fundamental covenant relationship of Israel to Jehovah, really applies to all His commandments. That principle is, that Israel are under obligation to serve Him in adoring love (ver. 6) on account of what He is to Israel, (1) as God the Creator, (2) as Jehovah the Redeemer.

**First Commandment.** 3. *Other gods: alien and strange. Before me: lit. first my face.* When taking after other gods Israel in following ages might, like Aaron with the golden calf, profess to hold by Jehovah at the same time ("God and mammon"). But He here said from the outset that to have any other god in any way is an open outrage on His being, as the Redeemer, the only God living and true. *Thou.* The singular person is Israel, and, the Israelite. While the collective implication gives impressiveness to the personal application, on the other hand the personality of the address to every man distributively carries the matter home to the individual conscience and heart.

**Second Commandment.** 4-6. On proposed amalgamation of this precept with the first, see initial note here. *Graven* image is the individual for the species. A *mollen* image is in its nature the same thing, relatively to worship, as a graven one; and a picture the same as a statue. The thing condemned is material *likeness* of anything, etc., as employed for worship (ver. 6). Romanists say that they do not worship the dead thing, but employ it as a *help* to realize the invisible presence. *Heathens* made the same apology to primitive Christians (witness Athenagoras: *The Embassy*). Romanists make a distinction between *dulia*, which alone they give to creatures, and *latria*, which they give to God alone. But (1) *dulia*

visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the 6 third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and 7 keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him 8 guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Remember the

("service") is the highest thing we can give to God, and (2) *dulia* is the word employed by Christ in saying, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou *serve*." *Under the earth*: below the level of the land: the meaning is—no likeness of anything whatever in the world or universe. The Egyptians worshipped images of almost every sort of thing. *Jealous God*: here begins the scriptural custom of representing God's relation to the soul as *conjugal*; so that idolatry is "adultery." It is meant to represent on His part an affection of *union* (Mat. xix. 5) mysteriously profound and tender (Eph. v. 25-32). The *feeling* is not unworthy of God. That thing in it which, on a man's part, is morally good is good in God supremely as He is the Good Supreme. And so is the moral indignation, which is one aspect of that feeling in its goodness. *Fathers upon the children*. That, under the government of God, the children suffer in consequence of their fathers' iniquities, is simply a fact in the history of the world, and a most powerful motive to good conduct on the fathers' part (Act. xvi. 31). The fact has a special pertinency to the present subject of the manner or form of worship; because the form of worship is a thing in respect of which children are most likely to follow the bad example of their parents; if this generation lapse into idolatry or other superstition, the following generation will all but certainly be *born* idolatrous or superstitious. The children of thieves may be terrified into honesty. *Mercy*: mercy of God is a thing seriously believed in only as disclosed in the Bible revelation. *Thousands*: has been made to mean literally, thousands of generations,—as compared with "the third and fourth generations." That is an injurious overstrain into prosaicism. The meaning in fairness is, boundless fulness of mercy (Is. lv. 7, etc.). *Love me*. Here comes into view the true *principle* of "keeping my commandments" (see last paragraph of initial note here). Those who keep God's commandments *love Him* (Jn. xv. 10). Christ (Mat. xxii. 34) makes "love," branching out into two great commandments, to be the whole soul of Bible morality. Paul similarly (Ro. xiii. 10) makes "love" to be "the fulfilling of the law." *That hate me*. Impure worship betrays hatred of God (Ro. viii. 7). It is a way of *avoiding* Him, darkening the window through which comes the light of His manifested presence. Now, to avoid is to show "aversion," which is a face of hatred. But the *hate me* goes deeper. The absence of light is darkness: where there is not love, there is hate.

**Third Commandment** (see note on *profanity* under xxx. 32, 33). This precept has been made to prohibit only calling God to witness in **false swearing** (perjury). But in the present connection the Hebrew expression, natively susceptible of such a construction, really cannot have a meaning short of the generality which it has in our Version. Light use of divine names was very common among heathens, even educated men. Though among us profane swearing is deemed unworthy of a gentleman, on account of its outrage on ordinary feelings of decency, ungodly men have little feeling of the outrage on God's honour involved in the coarse impiety. And there may be the impiety



9 sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour,  
 10 and do all thy work: but the seventh day *is* the sabbath of  
 the Lord thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou,  
 nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-  
 servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy  
 11 gates: for *in* six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the

—unhallowed familiarity with sacred things—where there is not the vulgarity of coarseness.

**Fourth Commandment.** (1) The thing prescribed is *rest*. *God's rest* (cp. Ps. cxxxii. 14 and Re. iii. 20). On the Creator's part (Ge. i. 28, ii. 2, 3) the repose (in the remarkable expression, *refreshed*, in xxxi. 16, and note) on the creature is complacent, beneficent, conservative (= providence "preserving"). Correspondingly on man's the repose is on the Creator, now Redeemer: folding in it, satisfaction, restoration, experienced blessing (Is. lviii. 13, 14, and Ps. xcii., "for the Sabbath Day"). It is to *rest* in His heart that the Son of God invites His brethren of mankind (Mat. xi. 27, 28). It is the Decalogue Rest ("the Sabbath") that the Son of Man "is Lord of" (Mk. ii. 27, 28). Accordingly this "pearl" of days is the one "trampled under foot"—when (Nu. xi. 1-6) it is cast before swine. *Labour—work*. Labour is toilsome work. *Work* here is ordinary business of any sort. It is wholesome: six days of it in seven are good for man. The remaining day might be devoted to aesthetic culture or secular recreation. *God has willed it* for another purpose: religious rest, for the soul of man and the honouring of God. (2) An unbeliever said, that he had never had any doubt of the divinity of the Fourth Commandment; that no nation of selfish mankind would have cared so tenderly for the bodily rest of slaves and beasts. Luther and Calvin, in their view of the natural grounds of the law, laid stress on the due refreshment of working-men. Moses (De. v. 14) made this a special reason why the *householder* should keep Sabbath (that servants might have rest). A London 'bus conductor said, that he never saw his children but when they were asleep. As for dumb sentient creatures, God cares for them (Ps. civ. 21); so will a godly man (Mat. v. 45, 48). The **tempting seasons**, of sowing and reaping, are to make no difference (under xxx. 21): the greedy farmer, who saves his corn, does not "regard the life of his beast" (Prov. xii. 10). *All*. Prof. Miller (*Labour Lightened not Lost*) said, that physiological man is an eight-day clock: if work be allowed to invade the resting day, he is living on the capital of his life. At a Conference of Librarians of Great Britain, one opposed opening Libraries and Museums on the Lord's Day for this reason, that man needs the **religious rest** for the life of his soul. (3) *For—hallowed it*. To say that the Sabbath is not made holy by God from creation, is to contradict Ex. xx. 11, as well as Ge. iii. 3. And the fact of His having done so, as a **reason** for man's keeping the day holy, applies equally to all men in all ages and nations. (4) *Six days*. The **duration** of the days does not affect the reasoning: the *point* is, man's life is to be conformable to that "pattern" (*type*, in He. viii. 5, see under xxv. 9). In the time of the great Church Fathers, an opinion much in vogue among them was, that creation took place *in an instant*; so that the history in Ge. i. is not chronological in meaning, but logical; in chronological form for orderly exposition of what was *done* at once. It now is known that the world's origination extended over a vast period; so that the

sea, and all that in them *is*, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

- 12 Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.
- 13, 14 Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- 15, 16 Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness
- 17 against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his

"days" of actual creation must have been æons (cp. "the day of the Lord," "Abraham saw my day"). But the point of the hebdomadism always remains: in some sense, God's creative week included six working days followed by rest; let man's life be an "image" of *that* (it may be a *miniature*, as man himself is only an infinitesimally small miniature image of God, Ge. i. 26). (5) *Remember* (cp. "Remember thy Creator"). There is a tendency to forget (Ps. ix. 17). The heathen remembrance of this institution is only as a palæozoic fossil (see under xvi. 23): scattered fragments of what now is dead, valuable as evidencing what once lived among mankind. *Remember* thus has the force of, *keep it alive*. *Seventh*. The great mass of Christians have understood that, if there be the period of seven days, rounded by a day of religious rest, the nature of the prescribed week remains unchanged though the place of the day is now at the beginning of the week, while in Israel ("wall of partition") it was at the close. The appointment of "the Lord's Day" (Re. i. 10) in memory of the resurrection of Christ (new *creation*, 2 Co. v. 17) has intrinsic appropriateness, and results in a real *Sabbatism* (the Gr. in He. iv. 9). To say that the appointment is by authority of "the Church," is to bring in the Church to a legislative office which has no warrant in Scripture (Mk. vii. 7). The authority, no doubt, is that of Christ through His apostles (Mat. xxviii. 19).

The Second Table (12-17). In application of the principle, Love thy neighbour (Ro. xiii. 8, 9), the precepts point to various *interests* which we are to respect. First, **Fifth Commandment**, 12, is the *honour* due to parents. *Mother*: woman is *honoured* in Israel alone of ancient civilised peoples (1 Pe. iii. 7). *Magistrates*, too, are to be honoured (1 Pe. ii. 17), and public ministers of religion (1 Ti. v. 17). The reverential affection due to creature superiors is limited by "the claims of the Supreme;" so that if we have to choose, we are to obey God rather than man. The **Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Commandments**, 13-16, guard, respectively, *life*, *purity*, *property*, and *reputation* (cp. the first four, regarding respectively, *object*, *form*, *spirit*, and *time* of worship). Regard for *life* may call, e.g., for sanitary legislation, improvement of machinery, so as ultimately to reduce the hours of labour *per* day to eight. Capital punishment is not necessarily regardless of life, but may be a guard on the sacredness of life. *Purity*: in this relation Christ (Sermon on the Mount) points to the heart; and incestuous marriage is placed by God (Lev. xviii.) under the head of "abominations" of heathenism. *Property* does not mean that "a man may do what he will with his own." It means, that it *is* his "own" (*proprium*), not another's; and that those who fear God will in this relation "regard man,"—as the unjust steward did not (Lu. xviii. 4). If any one wish for communism, God allows him to *communicate* (He. xiii. 16) abundantly, to *give* away all that he has (Act. iv. v., cp.



man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.

Act. xx. 35). *Reputation*, also, is by Christ guarded in the heart. A man is not made truthful by the formality of an oath. But "an oath for confirmation" is sanctioned by God's example as well as law. *The thing* always is, truth in love (Eph. iv. 15); which may wound, but has a weapon-salve. Detraction is almost as hateful as flattery. No one can permanently love anything untruthful: it is rotten (Eph. iv. 22, 29—where observe "the old man:" not only the hero Odysseus was an unscrupulous liar; the Patriarch Abraham was not always scrupulously truthful). The Tenth Commandment is *original*, in comparison with heathen morality, as legislating for the fountain of action in the desires, where (Ro. vii. 7) it laid the grasp of criminating law on the conscience of Paul the Magnanimous. In De. v., relatively to neighbour's *wife* the word is not *covet* but *desire*: showing that coveting is *unlawfully* desiring. One may honestly desire a neighbour's book, and accordingly beg, or borrow, or buy it from him. This precept in going to the heart with its prohibition of *coveting*, corresponds to the Second Commandment in its going to the heart with implication of *loving*. They combine in showing that "the law is spiritual;"—as when, at some spot in a beautiful strip of green on brown hill-side, we perceive the water that is trickling down, behind the turf, as the true life of the whole.

NOTE 1. **On the Second Table.**—The matter of duty to man is so simple, that we might suppose there would in relation to it be no need of positive revelation of the law of nature. But (1) the legislation (1 Pe. ii. 12—iii. 11) gives a career to religion, making all the natural life of man to be a domain of religion (1 Co. vii. 24). (2) It gives a great support to natural law, by bringing in religion as motive to obey its precepts: thus the Heidelberg Catechism, like Ex. xx. 2, places the Ten Commandments under the head of *Our Gratitude*, co-ordinate with the two other heads of *Our Ruin* and *Our Redemption*. The "second" is "like unto" the first. The heathens, losing hold of God ("religion"—*religare*—is what draws and binds us to Him), really had not in them *the soul* of neighbourly duty. And (3) even as to the body of it, or material outward part, to a surprising extent, the plain practical morality of nature had died out among them. "Thou shalt not covet," the guard upon the heart, without which (Jn. xii. 6) a Christian is "a knave in grain," had not place in their morality. It is not as a stumbling patriarch, but as a model hero, that Odysseus was a consummate liar. The Spartans deemed it a virtue to be a successful thief. Menelaus, on his way home from Troy, made a competency by raid of robbery on Egypt; and all the "glorious" career of Rome was filibustering. Impurity was shameless and not infamous; it was practised as worship in temples; and abominations that now are nameless were indulged in even by honoured public teachers of morality (*e.g.* Sophocles and Socrates). As for sacredness of life, *infanticide*, at the discretion of parents, was substantially universal in the heathen world. Reverence for parents was far from generally being inculcated, as it is among the Chinese, whose "days" have been "long in their land." The *mother* could not be honoured where the wife and women were degraded. And even the "patriotism" was but a sort of parochial selfishness. For the heathens did not "honour all men." The "Greeks" despised all who were not Greeks as "barbarians." The Roman *hostis*, natively meaning "stranger," came heathenishly to mean "enemy." The servant (bond) was not a brother-man, but a useful though troublesome thing. The circumcision and the Passover, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, have changed all that. For Redemption is a restoration (see the civil laws in xxi.—xxiii.,—especially regarding slaves, women, and strangers)

to unity of mankind, in affection as in origin and species; so that he who loves God loves his neighbour also (1 Jn. iv. 19-21).

NOTE 2. **On Sabbath Legislation.**—Outside of the Decalogue, which is Catholic human in its aspect, there was under the Old Testament very important "Sabbath" legislation—regarding, *e.g.*, the Sabbatical and the Jubilee year, and the special Sanctuary services of the weekly Sabbath. That legislation, visibly Jewish in its type and scope, appears (Col. ii. 16) to have undesirably continued to influence some Christians after it was abrogated by the closing of the Old Dispensation. And it might be difficult to judge with warrantable confidence from the specifically Old Testament legislation what would be best for securing the due enjoyment of the Sabbath or Moral Law under the New Testament. *Of the alleged gloom of the Old Testament Sabbath, in the experience of men who were true Israelites, the Old Testament itself contains not a trace.* But the Old Testament discipline as a whole was characterized by a particularism of specification in ordinances that is out of keeping (Mat. ix. 17, cp. Act. xv. 10) with the comparatively free spirit of the New. To be bidden to do everything piecemeal is not good for a grown man. But where there is avoidance of multifarious regulation, there has to be some general understanding, on the part of individuals and families for their own guidance, of Christians for their common Church action especially of public worship, and of nations in the public interest which nations have in their trust. The nation, though it be not a missionary institute, is bound in its own public action not to violate God's law; so that, for instance, there ought to be no ordinary business of the nation done on the day of holy rest. Also, the nation is entitled, if not bound, to protect those who wish to enjoy the holy rest in the sacred stillness of the day; so that, for instance, there may be prohibited by law forms not only of business but of recreation, that are lawful on common days. The nation is entitled, in allowing such enterprise as the trade in railways, to stipulate that the proprietors shall not carry on their lucrative business in a manner fitted to injure or to undermine the institution of the people's day of rest, which God has made for man. Legislation on such a footing may be vexatious and oppressive if it run into dictation beyond the call of public duty and interest. But so may legislation about any matter upon any footing. The thing in question is *good law*—not bad.

NOTE 3. **On the Sabbath in Exodus.**—1. It has a great place in the legislation, such as to make it appear that in the legislator's opinion this institution is of very great importance for the true life of man. 2. *Irrespectively of the Fourth Commandment*, the history shows the weekly Sabbath as a fundamentally vital constitution of Israel as a nation in covenant with God: first, at the formation of the Covenant (xxiii.), and then (xxxiv.) at its renewal, God Himself gave it a foremost place in relation to Israel's true life through all time. This is without any allusion to the Fourth Commandment, though the Decalogue had been first published in that very season at Sinai. And before this publication the Sabbath law had appeared (xvi.), in connection with the manna, not as a new constitution, but as a previously existing constitution, which can at once be applied, without any explanation, to regulate the manna proceedings. The history here is consistent with the view that Sabbath-keeping had been a settled habit of Israel in Goshen, or at least was well known to the people there, as brought down by the patriarchs along with their tradition of creation. 3. *The Fourth Commandment* thus appears as having a distinct place and foundation in the moral law, though historically connected with the distinctively national constitution of Israel. Judging from Exodus, we might conclude that the Sabbath of Israel would have existed though there had been no Decalogue, and that the Fourth Commandment would have been given for mankind though there had been no Sabbath of Israel. The Jews in later ages came to be known by this "sign" as the Sabbatarian people. But Jehovah had from the outset made

Himself known as a distinctively Sabbatarian God. The "sign" was *His* (xxx. 13) before it was theirs. And even the specifically Israelitish national Sabbath is seen as rising out of the old immemorial relation of God to the Patriarchs, and to primæval mankind from the creation of the world. The Sabbath thus has two foundations, in the history of God's kingdom and in the moral law.

**NOTE on imperial and provincial moral law.**—The law of the family and that of the Sabbath are not merely positive laws, or prescriptions ordained in connexion with some condition that is not simply human, but really natural, since the conditions out of which they rise are in the constitution of man, and are coextensive with man's existence on earth in time. But they differ from other moral laws in this respect, that they can have no place excepting in time and upon earth; inasmuch as the conditions in which they live and move and have their being do not exist except in this visible world and life: in heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage; and in eternity there is no periodicity of working and repose, but eternal rest (which is service) or eternal unrest (which may be idleness). It is inconceivable that in any state of existence there should not exist the condition which gives occasion for the Third Commandment, prescribing reverence toward God, or that which occasions the Ninth Commandment, prescribing truthfulness toward man. Those laws, correspondingly, which apply to all conceivable states of man, we may describe as *imperial* moral laws; while those which apply only to the state of man in time on earth may be described as *provincial*. These provincial laws—of the Sabbath and of the family—were declared in Paradise to form the home and the week of man (which meet in the true ideal "Saturday Night"). They now are enshrined, side by side, in the heart of the Decalogue, which is God's "testimony." It is found that they are the Jachin and Boaz pillars of a regenerate society in the new kingdom of God among men. There consequently is a ceaseless antagonism of worldly interest, rooted in antipathy of worldly feeling against them:—overt or covert assaults upon the purity of the family constitution, or the integrity of the Sabbath institution, are characteristic of a worldliness which, taking some interest in the Bible religion, really dislikes it where it comes *home* "to men's business and bosoms." And it is especially in the case of these provincial laws that we perceive the great value of supernatural revelation of law that is natural. The imperial laws are to some extent like the laws of sound reasoning, which *cannot* be quite forgotten even by the most illogical; while the provincial laws are, in comparison with these, like the dictates of good taste, which may be completely overborne, giving place to vulgarity, unless there be a perfect model or "pattern" (cp. Ex. xxv. 9) before men's eyes, independent of their depraved fancies. Practically, the law of the family and of the week are not safe except under shield of divine revelation.

#### Exercise 37.

1. Distinguish between moral and positive law, illustrating from the Decalogue.
2. State three proposed modes of classifying the Ten Commandments.
3. What about the proposal to break our Tenth Commandment into two?
4. Distinguish between principle and precepts of morality, and illustrate from the Decalogue.
5. Give names of the Old Testament Moral Law, and describe its place.

**Epilogue** in xx. 18–26 to the narrative in xix.–xx. 17. This section is by some placed in the Book of the Law, spoken of at xxiv. 4, 7, as the first part of the legislation recorded in chaps. xxi.–xxiii. That legislation is all of one kind, civil law, specifically different from the prescription in our text, which is of an exclusively religious character. The nature of what is here recorded seems to place it peculiarly in close relation to the immediately preceding narrative. An

- 18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and, when the people saw *it*, they removed, and stood afar off.
- 19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will  
20 hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye  
21 sin not. And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God *was*.
- 22 And the Lord said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with  
23 you from heaven. Ye shall not make with me gods of silver, neither shall ye make unto you gods of gold.
- 24 An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings,

altar (xvii.) and a sacrifice (xviii.) came into view after the great event of the victory over Amalek. And the Lord's reminder here, of the far grander event of His self-revelation in giving the Moral Law, is almost formally in continuation of the spoken intercourse of the people with Him, then through Moses as the Mediator.

18-21. Here the terrors appear as if resumed after a pause for the utterance of the Ten Words; and the people, under the renewed power of those terrors, go far back from the sacred mountain. The near presence (cp. Job xlii. 6) of God gives them a feeling of **need of mediation**, such as has previously (xix. 23, 24) been provided for their want. Moses now intimates to them, what had been made known from the outset of the march from the Red Sea passage (xv. 25, xvi. 4), that a purpose of Jehovah in these terrors is to *prove* them (they are already being brought, ver. 19, into salutary *self-knowledge*). But he now adds, that it is a purpose also, *that the fear of God may be before their faces*: that is, that the fearfulness of God, as majestic and awful in His glory of holiness, should be ever *in their view* as a regulative influence in their heart and life. Sinai has stamped its impress on the spiritual character of the people of God through all following ages to this hour. That species of *adoring* love to God, which is meant by the "fear" of Him, has had no real existence in the religious life of heathenism. The return of Moses to *thick cloud* (under xix. 26) renews our impression of there being on this occasion, on the part of God, manifested supernaturally not only a general occupation of that Sinai mountain, but a more specially manifested presence at a particular spot (cp. in the Sanctuary, the relation of the Holiest to the Holy Place). 22-26. The preamble here is like a repetition of the preface to the Ten Commandments. But it refers expressly, not to their past experience of Deliverance from Egypt, but to what now has taken place in their experience of Sinai mountain. The Lord now employs, as a *fulcrum* for launching this people upon their new career of living unto God, the express articulate revelation of Himself by Jehovah in spoken words: cp. the resurrection of Christ, as at the day of Pentecost and all through the apostolic age, the mainspring of all activity in and for the



thy sheep, and thine oxen : in all places where I record my  
 25 name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee. And if  
 thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it  
 of hewn stone : for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast  
 26 polluted it. Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto mine  
 altar, that thy nakedness be not discovered thereon.

kingdom of God. Has there ever been any real movement of living unto Him *without* such revelation? A deistical movement? No deistical religion has ever *lived* among a people. But now He has a further special purpose in appealing to what they have so recently *seen*, what they have perceived with their bodily senses,—namely, prevention of idolatry, namely, of the use of images as prohibited in the Second of the Ten Words. It is to us almost inconceivable that a rational being should be an idolater. But idolatry had a fatal fascination for the chosen people, with all their outward light of revelation, down to the ruin of the remaining part of Israel in the Babylonish captivity. And now, newly come out of Egypt, the very hotbed of an all-embracing idolatrous polytheism, they had need of being strongly forewarned and forearmed against this sin which did so easily beset them. Accordingly, Jehovah leads them to mark, in what they saw, not only the supernatural revelation of His mind, but the transcendency of His being, His eternal power and Godhead as manifested in and through that revelation. That will show them the *unworthiness* of the thought of worshipping the Eternal God with works of sinful human hands (so in Is. xl. 18-26, xlv. 9-20). The references to the *altar* (see on the abiding Altar of Burnt Sacrifice under xxvii. 1-8), with its sacrifices, are apparently for this especial purpose. That an altar ought to be only of earth, or of unhewn stone, was an impression even among heathens, and was faithfully adhered to in Israel's erection of altars according to the mind of God; for the "brazen altar" was really a framework or envelope, in which the earthen altar was contained. A general purpose served in this way, as also in the prescription of the animal sacrifices, was to show that in the offering there was no production of man's hand, but only what had been produced by God Himself in creation and in providence. But a special purpose, besides, was accomplished by the prohibition of the use of tools in shaping stones; namely, to prevent the possibility of their sliding into shaping the stones *into figures* that might be incentive to a carnal idol-worship. The instruction about *steps* here has nothing of censure on steps as steps. That, too, was only a further provision for securing that reverence, the "great fear," which is becoming in the worship of the Most High, and which might be interfered with by any suggestion of offence to natural feelings of propriety or decency.

**The Book of the Covenant** (xxi.-xxiv.) is *the first book ever publicly read* in the kingdom of God. The record of the writing of it is given (xxiv. 4) along with the record (ver. 7) of what took place immediately after the receiving of it in the audience of the people; to which (cp. xix. 7, 8) they responded, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient." The only thing we certainly know about the contents is (ver. 4), that "Moses wrote all the words of the Lord," after (ver. 3) He had "come and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do." "Judgments" is the description which our history gives of the collection of civil laws in chaps. xxi.-xxiii. Whether there

may not have been, in addition to these, in that Book of the Covenant, "the words of the Lord" in the Moral Law, as well as those which He uttered in the Preparation, we have no means of really ascertaining. But there is no reasonable doubt that in that Book there were written the judgments recorded in the three chapters of civil law to which we now have come. And (see *Introd.* pp. 60, 61) it may be reasonably assumed that this "Book" included chaps. xix.—xxiv.

These laws apparently are more or less a reproduction of what had been in some way known before. Probably they include a sort of simple codification of what had grown into the possession of Israel as traditional consuetudinary law, both during the Egyptian sojourning and back to the first beginning of their history in the Patriarchal Age. They may thus in part contain an inheritance of artless administrative wisdom and justice through Abraham from beyond the Flood. And now they are completed and adjusted to the existing and prospective condition of Israel by authority of God, and solemnly accepted from Him by the infant nation as at the foundation of their national covenant with Jehovah. What we are to look for in these laws is, not the elaborated ideal constitution of a commonwealth such as might conceivably exist in heaven, but "rudiments" of the sort of practical direction regarding neighbourly rights and duties which was suitable to the condition of Israel in that place and time. What really is most interesting for us is, not the legal information or instruction to be obtained here, but the historical instruction, which may be derived from those laws, regarding the condition of that Israel of the exodus for which they were given under the fatherly care of God the Redeemer.

In the giving of these laws Moses stood in a twofold relation to the people. First, at the suggestion of Jethro, he has committed the handling of actual cases to select men all through the tribes and their divisions and subdivisions, and reserved himself for dealing with general questions, and with difficult cases coming to him by a last appeal. And the present collection of "Judgments" (*judicia*) we may perhaps regard as a first-fruit of that study of his, issued for the purpose of giving to his judges, great and small, some coherent view of the kind of grounds to be proceeded on in cases that may come before them; while at the same time the peoples, through the publication of the laws, will be educated for giving intelligent assent to the decisions of the judges, and for saving the judges much labour by deciding the cases in their own mind, so as not to need to go to law about them (because agreeing with their adversary quickly while they are in the way). This, then, would fall to be regarded as "the maiden effort," in systematic legislation, of by far the greatest human legislator that the world has ever seen. But beyond that (though through it) and above it, so as wholly to eclipse it, Moses, we remember, is a prophet. One leading effect of the wonderful and terrible manifestation of Jehovah in the people's view has been (xix. 9) to show them this Moses in such intimacy with God that they shall believe him for ever. And now, when he solemnly recites to them "the words of the Lord, and all the judgments," they receive these, not as the words of man merely, but as the word of God. Of course they can see, better than we can, that much of what they hear has before now been familiar to them, and that the human wisdom of Moses has been exercised upon it all. But not the less they receive it all as oracular, divine. The gold has been lying about before; now it is collected and coined into currency of the kingdom. Old coins have been gathered in. All has now been passed through the mintage of the royalty of heaven. Everything has upon it the image and superscription of heaven's King, "who maketh all things new" (*Re.* xxi. 1, 5).

A lawyer would find that the distinct "judgments" in the collection, amounting to so many laws, are more than sixty in number. And perhaps he might arrange them under three heads, of *laws regarding person*, *laws regarding property*, and *laws miscellaneous* (not reducible to any one class). We, studying brevity, will avoid ambitious technicality of commentary *De Jure Civili*.

**LAWS AFFECTING PERSON** (xxi. 1–32). The condition of society here provided



CHAP. XXI. I. Now these *are* the judgments which thou shalt  
 2 set before them. If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years  
 he shall serve; and in the seventh he shall go out free for

with laws is extremely simple: there is nothing to be seen nor heard of that does not exist in the most elementary social condition of mankind. The *ox* has a large place, as perhaps is to be expected in the live-stock of a people newly from Goshen. Far more striking and profoundly interesting is the fact that the beginning and the close of this chapter is *about slaves*. The striking thing is, not their existence; for bond-service was almost the only kind of service known in the ancient world. The impressive specialty here is, *protection for the slave, in the statute-book of the nation, by authority of God its King*. One of the saddest things in the history of mankind is that, over all, among the ancient peoples, the slave had no protection, but was at the absolute discretion of his owner for any outrage, though it should be worse than death. Here, *in the first morning of the history of the first-born of nations, the first page on the statute-book is occupied with protecting slaves*. That, for Moses and his people, is a good beginning. And (cp. Ro. viii. 29) it is auspicious for the future nationalities, of which this is the "first-born."

Also, there is guardian *care for woman*. We have seen that woman is placed for "honour," along with man, in the highest place next to God, at the heart of the Moral Law, which is to be placed as His testimony in the heart of the heart of His Most Holy Place. That, not quite strange in Egypt, will be more and more a thing unheard of elsewhere—that woman should be *honoured* (1 Pe. iii. 7, cp. ii. 17) in a world that lies in wickedness. But the woman whom we now see here is not a wife and mother, honoured queen of the household, but a female slave. She is in a position which to us is startling strange; that, apparently, of a sort of secondary wife. We may wonder that Moses suffered such a thing to exist. The Son of Man has borne him witness (Mat. xix. 8), that it was on account of "the hardness of their hearts." Under the discipline of Moses and the prophets, such things had ceased to be in Israel long before the "day" of Christ. But it pleased God to accomplish that result, not by an inconceivable miracle abruptly turning Egyptian slaves all at once into full-formed free civilised men, but (Pro. iv. 18, cp. 1 Co. xiii. 12) by a gradual process of education through revelation, as the eye is trained through twilight to endure the full daylight of noon.

Among the miscellaneous laws we shall find (see initial note to xxii. 16, etc.) some utterances that are not properly laws, dictating the matter of particular duties, but rather, civilising maxims of a simple, popular philosophy, such as the first founder of an infant nation might go dropping among the rude unformed people, seed-thoughts of a future civilisation, and for the present serving to soften the manners by insensibly influencing the thought, which waters the affections at the root of life; cp. the "gnomic" saws of the Wise Men of Greece, and the homely maxims of "Poor Richard" (Franklin). One of those planting and watering thoughts was,—You Israelites were strangers and slaves in Egypt: be kind to strangers and slaves. They had been educated for sympathy in the school of suffering (He. iv. 15); and so, for qualification, as a royal priesthood (1 Pe. ii. 9), to be effectively mediatorial people. Here it is an escaped slave who, through the statute-book of emancipated slaves now forming a free nation, begins the first publication of civil law to a nation with a provision for protection of slaves.

The Hebrew servant (1-6). By adoption (xii.) a stranger could become as a born Israelite. This servant was "bought." So in effect is the servant among us who contracts for a term:—he sells his freedom for that term. Here the servant "sold" himself (cp. "sold-ier"); some might fall into

- 3 nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself; if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him.  
 4 If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her  
 5 master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children;  
 6 I will not go out free: then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door-post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an awl; and he shall serve him for ever.  
 7 And if a man sell his daughter to be a maid-servant, she  
 8 shall not go out as the men-servants do. If she please not her master, who hath betrothed her to himself, then shall he let her be redeemed: to sell her unto a strange nation he

involuntary servitude; e.g. through bankruptcy (Lev. xxv. 35, 39). 1. The Israelitish servant had *privileges*:—(1) by circumcision, he was one of the holy nation, the royal priesthood (xix. 6); (2) by Passover (xii.), he was one of his owner's family, eating of the same redemption lamb (cp. case of Onesimus and Philemon). 2. He had *hope*: the worst element of slavery, hopelessness, for him did not exist. His service could not extend beyond six years—thus like a long apprenticeship. The occurrence of a jubilee year would break the term. Jacob served twice seven years for love. 3. The condition had *attractions*. He did not *need* to marry a slave, so as to have slave offspring. He could remain with wife and children, sharing their condition. In any case the marriage bond was not dissolved.—As for *the female slave*, “given” for a wife, Moses did not in this law create this peculiar constitution, but guarded against abuses under it. A slave—such an one as Eliezer of Damascus, Ge. xv.—might *choose* to remain in the servile condition (the Heb. word for *judges* here is lit. “gods;” cp. Jn. x. 35). But the expression may mean only—see xviii.—that they went to God (plur. form, *elohim*). To remain “for ever,” probably excepted a year of jubilee occurring. *Boring* the ear is spoken of as if a well-known custom of ancient peoples in this case. It meant *obedience*: see on the priest's ear in xxix. 20; cp. “*obey* not the gospel.” Being *fixed* to the door,—or, if that was not convenient, to the post,—meant, *permanency* of the condition. *N.B.*—Christ, for our emancipation, thus took on Him “the form of a servant,” Phi. ii. 6, 7 (He. x. 5, cp. Ps. xl. 6).

**The maid-servant (7–11).** The case supposed is that of a man's taking her on trial for a wife, perhaps (see initial note here) a kind of secondary wife, to himself or to his son. She, a poor man's daughter, thus had a chance of a great position of honour. In the worst event, what this law does is to *protect* her so far—(1) that she is not to be “sold” away from Israel, but to be redeemed,—that is, her friends have a choice of buying her back from bondage. (2) If she once be a wife, she cannot be displaced by another from any of the conjugal rights of a wife. (3) If she become the wife of his son, he has to hold her as a daughter. *If he do not these things*: the real meaning may be, “if he do not arrange by means of *some one* of the things”—either her redemption, or her being bought by another Hebrew, or her

shall have no power, seeing he hath dealt deceitfully with  
 9 her. And if he have betrothed her unto his son, he shall  
 10 deal with her after the manner of daughters. If he take  
 him another *wife*, her food, her raiment, and her duty of  
 11 marriage, shall he not diminish. And if he do not these  
 three unto her, then shall she go out free without money.  
 12 He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put  
 13 to death. And if a man lie not in wait, but God deliver *him*

being married to his son. *Go free without money*: her father not refunding what was paid for her. In ver. 8, *dealt deceitfully with her*, means, **has not carried out the contract** of betrothal; and, *let her be redeemed*, **give an opportunity** to any who may choose to buy her out. In any case, he is never to have power to make her a mere domestic drudge. Selling daughters was a well-known practice in the ancient world. The Mosaic law here is all in mitigation of the sad common lot, and protection of the feeble.

NOTE on the "permission" of evil in these two cases.—The only thing which God may with propriety be said to "permit" is sin. It is not consistent with Scripture, nor with the nature of things, to say that bond-service as such in all cases involves sin. Slave-owners were members in unquestioned good standing in the Apostolic Church; and the Hebrew servant bound six years was abstractly in the same position as the British servant bound six months. The Old Testament system as well as the New made effectual provision for immediate amelioration of the condition, and ultimate emancipation from it, through the principle of spiritual equality and brotherhood in standing, along with provision for educating the servile class into the intellectual as well as moral maturity of full-formed manhood. The case of polygamy and kindred evils, of which we obtain a side-glance in this section, is of a different character. In the essence of that, there always is what we now regard as an element of moral evil; an *unnatural* connection of the sexes which is injurious to society, and specially detrimental in its essence to womanhood. Yet it is striking that this was borne with on account of "the hardness of men's hearts." The Old Testament provided effectually for the ultimate righting of the wrong; through the principle of the spiritual equality of the sexes as having rational souls, and by authoritative declaration (Ge. ii. 24, cp. Mat. xix. 3-6) of monogamy as the true normal original condition. The effectiveness of that provision is *seen* in the New Dispensation, where polygamy completely disappears, and for ever. And under the Old Dispensation men were in various ways made to feel the essential intrinsic unhappiness of polygamy. Still, under the old it was allowed to live on, or to die a very long, slow, lingering death. Perhaps we may be able to see some reason for this. But on the face of the matter we here see another case of, what appears in so many cases, God's permitting *sin* to exist. The question, *why* should there be a divine permission of sin? we will not discuss. We will simply observe the fact, of which the whole world is full, that He really does permit sin. The Creator permits what the king condemns.

Capital Crimes (12-17). It is notable that the protection of the slave should have come before the vindication of the sacredness of life. The sentence, 12, states generally the principle (Ge. ix. 6), that the murderer shall not live, charging the nation with unfailling execution of this doom. The principle, 13, does not apply except in the case in which the murder is deliberate and premeditated. God's *delivering one into another's hand*,—as if showing the king's "warrant" for execution,—is here explained by the pre-

- into his hand; then I will appoint thee a place whither he  
 14 shall flee. But if a man come presumptuously upon his  
 neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from  
 mine altar, that he may die.  
 15 And he that smiteth his father or his mother, shall be  
 surely put to death.  
 16 And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be  
 found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

ceding clause as meaning, that the opportunity of slaughter has come in the course of providence unsought, so as perhaps to present a temptation which may be pleaded in extenuation. The appointment of a place to which the slayer might flee was in Canaan carried out (Josh. xx. 7, 8) by means of the six Levitical Cities of Refuge, three on each side of the Jordan, so placed that every spot in Canaan was within a day's journey of some one of them. An ancient custom, a survival of (*judicial* constitution of) patriarchy, made the nearest relatives of one slain by a private hand chargeable with avenging the shed blood. In the case of deliberate planned murder, the whole community takes the place of that individual avenger. With reference to the violent death of Bishop Patteson, Bishop Selwyn (*Life*) notes, that such action of cannibal heathens may not be in "cruelty" or mere savagery; that these Polynesians hold themselves, as a people, collectively *bound* to punish an outrage by a white man in the person of any white man they may get into their power. But in the case now in view the nation shields the slayer. In the City of Refuge he had a sanctuary of safety until the matter should be investigated by those in authority there; and his life was forfeit only if *they* found him worthy of death. The sentence, 14, defines particularly the case in which no such provision shall be available. The *presumption*, of our proceeding by *guile* (*lying in wait*, ver. 13), consists in the high audacity of this crime, *coolly assuming the power* of destroying life; as contrasted with the case of one who may reckon it a lamentable mischance that there is thrust upon him the fatal opportunity which he deems a call in Providence. It here appears why the Cities of Refuge were *Levitical* (some other arrangement to the same effect was probably made for the wilderness time). God's *altar* was a sanctuary, though not always inviolable (1 Ki. i. 50, ii. 28) (as the Red Comyn found). The divine presence was—as is joyfully owned in the Psalms—thus regarded as a Refuge; which presupposes propitiation (witness He. xii. 29). The very high place given, 15, to parentage in the Sinaitic legislation is shared by the mother, in whose person here again **woman is "honoured"** (1 Pe. iii. 7) as man is. A learned and able commentator states that the severity of punishment for this offence is without parallel in criminal legislation. An old Scottish law made the same offence to be punishable by death "without mercy." Yet Canaan and old Scotland are the two famous lands of song (*i.e.* the two happy lands). Perhaps profound reverence for parentage is near akin to godliness, which makes a people to be happy. An irreverent rising generation has a dark outlook into an unhappy future (cp. xxxi. 14 with note, and note on the severity of God under xii. 29-36). As for man-stealing, we remember that Joseph's bones were in the camp, and this may be a late confession of offence ancestral. They may have often, in thinking of him, felt the enormity of the offence. A



- 17 And he that curseth his father or his mother, shall surely be put to death.
- 18 And if men strive together, and one smite another with a stone, or with *his* fist, and he die not, but keepeth *his* bed ;
- 19 if he rise again, and walk abroad upon his staff, then shall he that smote *him* be quit : only he shall pay *for* the loss of his time, and shall cause *him* to be thoroughly healed.
- 20 And if a man smite his servant, or his maid, with a rod, and he die under his hand ; he shall be surely punished.

stolen man would be sold far away out of knowledge of home and friends. Israel knew the misery of bondage in a strange land of heathens. So did white Christians in Algiers, until British sailors pulled that nest of pirates down. *N.B.*—With guardianship so trenchant, the condition of the servile class in Israel might not greatly differ, except in (inglorious childish) immunity from care, from that of unskilled labourers in Britain. The return, 17, to *lese majesté* of parentage exhibits this law as looking to the heart. Essentially the crime here is one of sentiment. And so in large measure is the crime in man-stealing. But murder, the highest crime conceivable, analogue of atheism, is essentially a feeling in the heart ; as has been pointed out (Sermon on the Mount) by that Son of man who is to judge us all.

Unintentional crimes of anger (18–27). If a sea captain run his vessel to wreck through carelessness, or a sleeping sentinel be an open gate of ruin to a citadel, there is criminality without intention. But in the cases now coming before us there is the element of wrath, which may be malicious, and which in any case has to be sternly kept within bounds—as if man had a “tame” tiger about his house. 18, 19. The *stone* or the *fist* is here regarded, not as lethal weapon, but as exculpatory evidence thus far, that manifestly there was no studious preparation to inflict a serious injury on the person, as when the stroke is with a dagger or club. The thought of damages will cool the blood of any man who is not insane with passion ;—as for an avaricious man, though he be fierce in courage as a lion, the thought will chill the marrow in his bones. Thus “private vices” may be “public benefits”—a truth which can be abused by a false-hearted Mandeville (*Fable of the Bees*). The bare damages awarded to those who are hurt will not encourage *them* to put themselves into harm’s way, perhaps provoking a blow, in order to make money out of their neighbour’s infirmity of hot blood. 20, 21. The great attention bestowed on the slave class, while it fosters a good heart of royal priesthood in the holy nation, at the same time shows that the servile condition is natively undesirable, as involving naked exposure to maltreatment ; it is the sick that are “attended to” by this physician Law. The *rod*, symbol of a *slave’s* punishment, is seen on Egyptian monuments, and was felt by Israel in Egypt. The restraint on passion here is a humbling fact. A farmer—in *Christian* Scotland !—may leave his servant to die untended in an outhouse ; if anything go wrong with his horse, he sends for the farrier. “There is a great deal of human nature in man.” The law here had to contend with the prevalent view, that a man was absolute owner of his slave ; and it thus could deal only with aggravated cases of outrage upon natural human feeling, as when our law punishes “cruelty to animals,” or a parent is punished for

- 21 Notwithstanding, if he continue a day or two, he shall not be punished: for he *is* his money.
- 22 If men strive, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart *from her*, and yet no mischief follow: he shall be surely punished, according as the woman's husband will lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges *determine*. And if
- 23 *any* mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for
- 24 eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for
- 25 burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.
- 26 And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's
- 27 sake. And if he smite out his man-servant's tooth, or his maid-servant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.

outrageous maltreatment of a child. Paul knows (Act. xvi. 39) that to "beat" a Roman citizen is, even for magistrates, a severely punishable crime; and if he thrice was beaten with rods, he felt the shameful outrage on his manhood. It is understood that the law in the present case refers only to the case of an *alien* slave; that an Hebrew bond-servant was, in respect of personal treatment, by law on the same footing as a free man. Observe that here woman is seen exposed to maltreatment. And what perhaps is worse, woman is often the person who inflicts it, being the one in charge of the domestic discipline. 22-25. In this case, perhaps the sufferer has thrust herself into a quarrel to separate the combatants; if not—as once happened in a painful experience to Macnab of Macnab—taking part with her husband. It was a rule of "chivalry," that combatants shall discontinue their fighting at the bidding of a child, a woman, or a priest. The injury to the woman's person in the present case may not have been intended. But "the redding-stroke" is proverbially dangerous. Her presence and condition ought to have caused a termination or adjournment of the fighting. And the unchivalrous continuance—as of fighting brutes—may cost three lives. The *mischief* here, as in Ge. xlii. 4, is a euphemism for *fatal result*,—to the woman. The *lex talionis*, forbidden (Mat. v. 38) to private personal revenge, is a maxim of passionless public justice. It was ascribed to Rhadamanthus, judge in the unseen world. That means, that it is generally approved by men's inner sense of right. This it is as representing the principle, that the kind and amount of punishment ought to be in proportion to the character and degree of injury inflicted. In strict literalness it would never be carried far; for instance, to take away one eye of a one-eyed man would be to blind him, and throw a helpless burden on the community in the place of a useful member of society. When the literal punishment was commuted into a money fine, the formula still remained as a guide in estimating the due amount of the fine. *According as—judges* (a peculiar word for *judges* here). That is, it was for the husband to raise the action, and for the judges to determine in the case. 26, 27. A further guard against maltreatment of slaves. The *eye* is the most important member that can be lost, and a *tooth* is the least important. The meaning of this law is, that any real bodily mutilation makes the servant free.



28 If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the  
 ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten;  
 29 but the owner of the ox *shall be* quit. But if the ox were  
 wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been  
 testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that  
 he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned,  
 30 and his owner also shall be put to death. If there be laid on  
 him a sum of money, then he shall give, for the ransom of his  
 31 life, whatsoever is laid upon him. Whether he have gored a

Personal injury through an ox (28-32). In the wilderness an Israelite had not other property through which an injury of this sort could visit him or his neighbour—*e.g.* no (runaway) horse. The ox, though not pastured there now, could be pastured there then; and might be needed for whatever cropping or other agriculture the Israelites carried on in places of the wilderness. In connection with him there is here fresh illustration of the high regard which the Sinai code has for the sacredness of human life. The stoning of the ox to death was, like the manner (under xix. 13) of punishing intruders on the sacred mountain, itself an outward sign of abhorrence on account of the violation of the sanctuary of manhood; and the feeling thus exhibited, of its being an accursed thing by which the violence had been done, is most vividly exhibited in the prohibition to eat the flesh of it. The great severity of the owner's punishment reminds us, that Cain was deeply criminal in the heart of saying, "Am I my brother's keeper?" and that a shipowner, who, in sending a rotten ship to sea, is only thinking about making money, is (*teste* Mr. Plimsoll) a murderer before God though the crew should not be drowned. The criminality was shown by the form of proceeding; but in this case, while the general rule is (as in Nu. xxxv. 32) that there shall be no commutation—"satisfaction"—for life in case of murder, the criminal's forfeited life could be redeemed by a ransom payment in money, the amount of which perhaps would be fixed by agreement or arbitration. The word here for a *sum of money* is *Kopher* (as in Nu. xxxv. 32) ("covering"), the Old Testament word for propitiation or atonement; and the use of it here is interesting as an illustration of the Bible meaning of ransoming or redeeming by means of an atonement (see note on *Kappôreth* under xxv. 17, and under xxix. 33 on *atonement*). This was *blood-money*, the equivalent of life, *covering* the forfeited life of the criminal, and so saving it. It does not appear that *coined* money was in use yet, as it was not in Abraham's time (Ge. xxiii. 16). *Money* in ver. 21 means simply property. The *shekel* in ver. 32 is a weight (as our *pound* originally was), and was a conventional unit of value, as an *ounce* of gold may be among miners, or as a *chaldar* of corn is among Scotch farmers paying tithe (In xxii. 17, *pay money*, is lit. *shekel* (weigh) money, like "Shovel out money"). The thirty shekels were to be the payment for a slave's life; which reminds of the price paid for betraying to death one who took on Him the form of a servant though He was natively in the form of God (Phi. ii. 6-10). The "redemption half-shekel" (xxx. 11-16, notes) had a wholly different meaning. For a child's life the procedure was to be as for a man's: thus showing, in contrast to heathenish infanticide (under i. 16—where observe that *Moses* had special cause to legislate for protection of infants), that *the thing* which

son, or have gored a daughter, according to this judgment shall it be done unto him. If the ox shall push a man-servant or a maid-servant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

is precious in a man is that which also is in the child, namely, the rational soul, the image of God (Ge. ix. 6). The slave's life—relatively to *this point*—was valued only as *worth service*: which illustrates the disadvantage of a slave's condition, as (1 Co. i. 26-28) among the "things which are not." It thus is not to be counted here as a derogation from the manifested sacredness of life. But the permission of a commutation in this case is in accordance with the spirit of these laws, which have a leading regard to criminal *intention*, or *criminal inattention*, as an element in relation to criminality.

NOTE on the distinction between "sin" and "crime."—In our use of language it represents an important difference in the nature of the things, which is illustrated by the difference between civil and spiritual jurisprudence. What the civil law has to do with is the overt action as affecting a neighbour's interest. What the Church has to do with is the state of the heart, as manifested in the overt action. Thus the Church court may have to censure, as a scandalous sin, action—*e.g.* profanity—which the civil law takes no notice of, because it does not affect the temporal interest of others. And the Church court may in certain cases have no censure for an action—*e.g.* "rebellion"—which the civil court may punish as a capital crime. But still, even the most frivolous crime is not imputed by the civil court without some regard to the intention, or *inattention*, as connecting the hand with the heart; it would not, *e.g.*, punish a man for what he does in his sleep, say, in somnambulism; nor hold Mary Lamb a murderess because, when out of her mind, she stabbed her mother to death. The fact that the Church discipline deals only with *scandals, manifested* sinfulness, as "offence" or stumbling-block to the brethren, is not to our present point,—it arises from a distinct kind of consideration.

#### Exercise 38.

1. Give a case of a crime which is not a sin, and one of a sin which is not a crime; and explain how in each case it is as you represent.
2. Criticize this argument, as a whole and in details:—African blacks are Ham; and God's curse on Ham is slavery: therefore John and Jonathan were bound to steal African blacks in order to make money by the sale of them.
3. "Slaves cannot breathe in England." Yet there were thralls in the Saxon times. What has so changed the quality of the air, and how?
4. Describe the whole process in a trial for life on account of ox-goring.

**Laws regarding property** (xxi. 33-xxii. 15). Both in the editions of the Bible and in the Commentaries on it there is in connexion with these laws a certain amount of art employed for exhibition of the connexion of the parts of the collection. The critical apparatus which thus has arisen is a scaffolding which may obscure the building. The building, the Book which we are studying, is simply the text, considered apart from all such machinery as even the chapters and verses, and thus reads like a law document, such as a will or an Act of Legislation, which indeed it is. Looking thus at the Bible itself, we have seen that in fact the laws up to this point are occupied with guarding the person against injury. We now see that, in the section we have marked off, they are occupied with protection of man's property. The moral element of intention, or *inattention*, is still kept in view as qualifying the action. But the specific lust is now, not of anger, but of greed. And the punishment correspondingly is made to

33 And if a man shall open a pit, or if a man shall dig a pit,  
34 and not cover it, and an ox or an ass fall therein; the owner  
of the pit shall make *it* good, *and* give money unto the owner  
of them; and the dead *beast* shall be his.

35 And if one man's ox hurt another's, that he die; then they  
shall sell the live ox, and divide the money of it; and the  
36 dead *ox* also they shall divide. Or if it be known that the  
ox hath used to push in time past, and his owner hath not  
kept him in; he shall surely pay ox for ox; and the dead  
shall be his own.

CHAP. XXII. 1. If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill  
it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four  
sheep for a sheep.

2 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die,  
3 *there shall* no blood *be shed* for him. If the sun be risen  
upon him, *there shall be* blood *shed* for him; *for* he should

crucify that lust, making the man heavily a loser by the transaction in which he seeks to be dishonestly a gainer. We thus have passed from the domain of the Sixth Commandment to that of the Eighth. The classes of cases are, *criminal carelessness, theft, trespass, and breach of trust.*

**Criminal carelessness** (xxi. 33-36). 33, 34. The *pit* here is a water-hole, cistern, or well, which a man may restore by opening anew, or open by digging for himself. When it is not in the course or act of being used, it ought to be covered by being closed over as with slabs, or fenced round. If through neglect of this a neighbour's ox or ass be made useless, the owner of the pit shall be punished for his carelessness so far that the neighbour is no loser. But as there is no serious immorality manifested, there is no graver fine. 35, 36. The appended case may be one of pure accident; and if so, the two neighbours, as blamelessly in a common misfortune, fairly divide the loss. But if one of them be blameable, in having let loose a vicious beast, he shall bear the loss, the scath as well as the scorn (unjust man).

**Theft or robbery** (xxii. 1-4). Here there is overt action of appropriating what is another's, that communism which in the extreme case is answered by a revolver or the hangman. The mildest punishment is, ver. 4, that the thief has to pay back double; which will make the private person injured to be zealous for the law. That is in the case in which, while the crime is perpetrated, yet the property is to the fore. If, ver. 1, the matter have gone so far that the property is made away with, the punishment is doubled, or more, if it be an ox that has been stolen. To the question, why is the punishment heavier for an ox than for a sheep? it has been answered, because the theft of the larger animal shows the greater audacity; and also—what seems a weak reason—because it is more grievous to the lawful owner. (*What is? does he love his ox more than his sheep?*) The central case involves the additional grave criminality of violating the sanctity of a neighbour's house (cp. xix. 12, 13), which is his inner "castle" or outer body. *Breaking up* here should be *breaking in, or through*: burglary, — say, by making a hole in a wall or tent curtain. That is a crime worthy of death, which the

- make full restitution ; if he have nothing, then he shall be  
 4 sold for his theft. If the theft be certainly found in his hand  
 alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep, he shall restore double.  
 5 If a man shall cause a field or vineyard to be eaten, and  
 shall put in his beast, and shall feed in another man's field ;  
 of the best of his own field, and of the best of his own vine-  
 yard, shall he make restitution.  
 6 If fire break out, and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of  
 corn, or the standing corn, or the field, be consumed *there-*  
*with* ; he that kindled the fire shall surely make restitution.  
 7 If a man shall deliver unto his neighbour money or stuff to

householder may inflict if the outrage be in darkness. When the sun is risen, the wolf can be seen coming or going, and the neighbours are stirring. There is not that extreme urgency of necessity which would warrant a private person's extemporaneous infliction of death—rather than allow the outrageous *wrong* to be done. That there shall be *blood* in such a case means,—to kill the thief would be murder, calling for the slayer's blood, or, for the Avenger. The amount of the *full restitution* here is not defined : it comes under the general rule, ver. 4. If that be not in the thief's purse, it has to be taken out of his bones. He cannot be a slave for more than six years. The sentence thus is, not more than six years of penal servitude. The early penal codes of England and other countries have been far more severe under this head than the Mosaic. That is natural among peoples who have Mammon for their god. But even when Jehovah was worshipped in spirit, bad neighbours were made to feel that "honesty is best policy" (bringing moral reasoning down to a thief's level).

Trespass (5, 6), in the leading case, ver. 5, has in it the meanness of making a depredator out of the hunger of an innocent beast, which the owner starves. The lower animals have no ambition ("moral proud-flesh"—Gr. *hubris*) for forbidden fruit. This ravaging of a strange cornfield or vineyard is presumptive proof that the creature is not well fed at home. In any case, the owner is responsible for the damage to what he ought to guard as his neighbour's property at the critical season. (See in *Shorter Catechism*, What is required in the Eighth Commandment?) Though that which he has spoiled should have been poor stuff, the spoiler has to replace it with his best. *Sic semper tyrannis!* The companion case, ver. 6, is much more grave. The hunger may consume a whole district ; the ravager has been known to pursue a swift horse many miles. A tramp, throwing away a lighted match, burns a noble forest, growth of centuries, with perhaps a settlement of hard-working honest men in its bosom. It is not long since in one case it took all the law's force to keep the people from tearing that kindler to pieces. In Sinai he may have thought only of cooking a meal for himself. But he did *not* think of his neighbour's peril, in this dry season, with thorns around. The dishonesty of his heartlessness will cost him dear. But so it should ; this law is a schoolmaster that *means* to make the teaching felt where it is needed ; making rogues bear the cost of their schooling into honesty. "The law is good."

Trust (7-13). There were no banks ; and a man sometimes—say, going on a journey—had to place his property for keeping—*e.g.* in a neighbour's

- keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house ; if the thief be  
 8 found, let him pay double. If the thief be not found, then  
 the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, *to*  
*see* whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods.  
 9 For all manner of trespass, *whether it be* for ox, for ass, for  
 sheep, for raiment, *or* for any manner of lost thing, which  
*another* challengeth to be his, the cause of both parties shall  
 come before the judges ; *and* whom the judges shall condemn,  
 10 he shall pay double unto his neighbour. If a man deliver  
 unto his neighbour an ass, or an ox, or a sheep, or any beast,  
 to keep, and it die, or be hurt, or driven away, no man  
 11 seeing *it* : *then* shall an oath of the Lord be between them  
 both, that he hath not put his hand unto his neighbour's  
 goods ; and the owner of it shall accept *thereof*, and he shall  
 12 not make *it* good. And if it be stolen from him, he shall  
 13 make restitution unto the owner thereof. If it be torn in  
 pieces, *then* let him bring it *for* witness, *and* he shall not  
 make good that which was torn.  
 14 And if a man borrow *ought* of his neighbour, and it be  
 hurt, or die, the owner thereof *being* not with it ; he shall

hand. 7-9: the case of moveable property not in animals. *Stuff* here has this general meaning: it is lit. vessels—that sort of property—*e.g.* the Egyptian “spoils.” This would include fine cloths, from needle and loom, as well as jewellery of gold and silver. In any case, his neighbour has accepted the trust. If the goods be stolen, and the thief be found, there shall be double restitution out of his purse (or his bones, ver. 3). Otherwise, the trustee has to clear himself before the *judges* (here again, lit. the gods, under xxii. 28) of the suspicion of a *pretended* robbery ; as when a man burns his house in order to get compensation from the Insurance Office for his goods (which perhaps were not in it). *All manner of trespass*: In all cases of alleged loss of trust property by dishonesty of others. *Which—his*: lit. which he saith, that this here is the thing. The owner says, The property was not stolen, it is to the fore. If that be found not true, he has to pay double: that is, lose his goods, and pay as much as the value of them for defaming his neighbour. If the trustee be found fraudulent, he is dealt with as a thief. 10-13. As to live stock. *Die—hurt*: natural tear and wear of cattle stock. *Driven—seeing it*: mysterious disappearance (a suspicious look of mystification). The *oath* “of purgation” has to be taken in proof of honest loss. (In the case of live stock, the losses *might* well be honest.) *If—stolen*. In this event of *preventible* loss he is presumed not to have been duly careful ; since he did not watch, let him catch—and refund his loss from the (affluent?) thief if he can. *Torn*: he was in this case watchful: witness the carcass, which the wild beast has not been suffered to destroy. At least there can be no suspicion of his having made away with the property ; it is here, though mangled. 14, 15. *The borrower* is a trustee, though it be for his own use. If the thing suffer detriment, let that fall on the custodier



15 surely make *it* good. *But* if the owner thereof *be* with it, he shall not make *it* good: if it *be* an hired *thing*, it came for his hire.

16 And if a man entice a maid that is not betrothed, and lie

or user. *If the owner be with it: e.g.* if he have gone to give a day's ploughing with his oxen. *Hired: e.g.* if he charged so much for a week's use of his plough (which includes liability to damage).

#### Exercise 39.

1. Illustrate from the above cases the principle,—“Omission is commission.”
2. Illustrate from the above cases the maxim,—“Who does by another does it himself.”
3. Illustrate from the above cases the presumption,—“Who excuses himself accuses himself.”
4. Illustrate from the above cases the truth,—“Godliness hath the promise of this life.”

NOTE: the “settled” look of things here is not like our impression of the wilderness wandering. But Israel in Sinai was not a wandering Jew, restless as the sea. Water holes—witness Beersheba—were a very serious business in the wilderness, more than anywhere else. There is some possibility of “settlement” in Sinai now, and there was much more then. Against the hot cliffs of Sinai, the vine can be raised in a season; and the fencing, which could be penetrated by a stray ox, was not so elaborate as in the Gospel parable (ideal). There must have been much cropping on arable patches, wherever the tribe or “house of fathers” squatted for a season. With Egyptian spoils, etc., the matter of deposit must have often been perplexing. Finally, the laws here are not extemporized for the occasion, but are an inheritance, adjusted to the occasion, and with an outlook to the future. *N.B.*—Is there a trace of previous residence in Canaan—anachronism?

Miscellaneous civil wisdom (xxii. 16–xxiii. 9). What we here have is (see initial note on *Book of the Covenant*, xxi.–xxiv., last paragraph) a collection of precepts and maxims not regularly classified, which may have partly come down as an accumulating stream of tradition from the early patriarchy, or grown out of experience and reflection in Egypt, and may have been delivered by Moses in his decision of cases in Israel's recent course of life. Though not systematically codified, they are separately applicable to the condition of Israel at the time, and conjointly are fitted to regulate the people's life to the same general effect as the preceding code. In their nature they are, to a considerable extent, regulative ethical maxims, dealing with life in its fountain of the affections, rather than statutory prescriptions of outward action in particular cases. Though logically not reducible to our plan, rhetorically they are fitted for our purpose, of giving a desirable *tone and tenor* to the course of Israel's life. The selection for that purpose by Moses gave occasion for the exercise, through his mediation, of the fatherly wisdom of that Legislator who “knows what is in man.” And with reference to the purpose of the selection, the collection is seen to form two parts:—I. xxii. 16–31, regarding especially the action of man *individually*, in exercise of goodness and mercy; and II. xxiii. 1–9, regarding especially the action of man *socially*, as affected by claims of justice.

Part I.: xxii. 16–31. The duties here are “of imperfect obligation;” that is, they are not binding in human law so that they can be enforced by penalties or other compulsitors, but arise out of that principle of benevolence (cp. Mat. v. 45) which impels a person to seek the welfare of sentient

17 with her; he shall surely endow her to be his wife. If her father utterly refuse to give her unto him, he shall pay money according to the dowry of virgins.

18 Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.

creatures, especially of man (philanthropy). It finds occasion in supporting the helpless and shielding the friendless. And, with no penal sanction in the statute law of man, it here has a remarkable penal sanction from the holy heart of God. The "wrath of God" (Ro. i. 18) is here *for the first time in Bible history* revealed directly by Himself against "ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." The crime, which is thus branded as a Cain, is failure in respect of due regard to the widow and the fatherless. The same spirit of law is further exhibited in the precept regarding a stranger, and in the provisions with reference to the poor. The miscellany thus is of the humanely generous character which appears in the preceding code, in which (Ex. xxi. 2, etc.) we saw that the first act of civil legislation for this new-born nationality was protection for slaves. There is an impression that the Old Testament legislation was somehow severe in the sense of being inhuman (see special note on the severity of God, under xii. 21-36). The fact is, that it was in the heart of it very tenderly considerate of humanity; so that it might be characterized as peculiarly and distinctively "humane," in the noble sense of the term. If it had a terror of God's wrath, that was a tenderness for the widow and orphan, the stranger and the poor. The severe penal sanctions of the law were fitted to serve the salutary purpose of preventing the tenderness from sinking into the ignobleness of sentimentalism, really not "humane." (The wild primrose flourishes highly under cover of the rough prickly furze.) 16-20. The miscellany of offences here has a general aspect of "abomination," deepening and darkening from step to step. 16, 17. *Betrothal* was a contract of espousals, which made the two to belong to one another though not actually married; and (De. xxii. 23, 24) seduction (*entice* would better be *seduce*) of an espoused virgin was punished with death of both the criminals. *Endow, dowry*. At that time and at present in some heathen lands, the "dowry" was money paid by the husband to the wife's father, as if he had purchased her; a degradation to woman incidental to the general conditions arising out of polygamy. The prescription in the text is for the remedying of a particular evil, making the best of a bad business, and as far as possible throwing the burden on the chief transgressor. The father might be unwilling to have him in his family at any price, and here obtains power of law to keep him out, while receiving compensation for the damage to the family estate. 18. *Witch*. The Hebrew word, which here is feminine, is masculine in De. xviii. 10 (as if "wizard"), *the only other place where our Version has "witch."*

NOTE on **witchcraft** (see note on *demonology* under vii. 13).—There is some variety in the Hebrew use of relative words; but generally **witchcraft** (which appears to have been practised by women rather than by men) was (like our present day spiritualism) a **professed dealing in supernaturalism without authority of the living God**. In the case of the witch of Endor, it assumed the form of necromancy, resembling some practices specifically of our modern "Spiritualism." In Egypt and elsewhere it might pass into "natural magic," and in some cases may have dwindled into the petty trickeries of vulgar "conjuring." All supernaturalism without the living God natively tends to wreck of the mind as well as ruin of the soul. It was mercilessly punished and

- 19 Whosoever lieth with a beast shall surely be put to death.  
 20 He that sacrificeth unto *any* god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed.  
 21 Thou shalt neither vex a stranger, nor oppress him: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.  
 22, 23 Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in anywise, and they cry at all unto me, I  
 24 will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless.  
 25 If thou lend money to *any of* my people *that is* poor by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt

stamped out even by the sounder-minded heathen communities—Greek and Roman. In Israel it was not only a sin against God, the Lord of nature, but a crime against Jehovah, the head of the theocracy, and as such was punishable with death. But in this text we note the absence of the rigorous, “shall *surely* die.” And in the application of this law there may have been some consideration of mitigating circumstances, such as gross ignorance or partial insanity; so that the extreme penalty might reach only those found “contumacious,”—irreclaimably obstinate in the great transgression.

19. This unnatural crime is said to have been practised in Egypt.  
 20. *Sacrifice* is the highest form of worship. The Heb. for *utterly destroyed* has the meaning of *devoted to destruction*, as an accursed thing.  
 21. *Stranger*: lit. *sojourner*, a residenter who is not naturalized, so as to have protective rights of citizenship (cp. under xii. 49). *Vex* here means not only grave oppressive wrong, but any sort of distressing annoyance to which a “stranger” is peculiarly exposed in a population not really “humane.” In old Rome the original word for “stranger” (*hostis*) came to mean “enemy.” It is said that such a law as this, in the interest of strangers, is not to be found in the constitutions of any people excepting Israel, and those peoples which have been humanized by the Christian revelation (cp. Mat. xxv. 35, 43; see further under Ex. xxiii. 9). 21–24. See initial note to this Part I. The *widow* and the *fatherless* make the most pathetic case of that comparative helplessness which appears in the stranger. The Scriptures after this (rock is smitten) are very abundant in illustration of the special tender care of Jehovah for such helpless, the resemblance of good men to Him in this particular, and His peculiar hatred of the baseness of injury to widows and fatherless. Note that He is (Ps. lxxviii. 5) “*the judge of widows*” (not their “husband”). The *sword* here implies a threat of foreign invasion and conquest. Injury to widows and orphans was a conspicuous feature of that moral condition of Israel in the later days, which occasioned the overthrow and the captivities. And it is to be observed that our word *afflict* here does not exactly represent the original, which includes cold or contemptuous disregard, as well as positive wrong: “my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you,” is God’s judgment upon giving the “cold shoulder” to a widow or to a fatherless child. Their *cry* awakens His wrath, as (Ex. iii. 7) when Israel cried in Egypt. 25–27. The case here is that of “the poor” (Ps. xli. 1, etc.). *Usury* in Scripture does not of itself (like our word

- 26 thou lay upon him usury. If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the  
 27 sun goeth down: for that *is* his covering only; it *is* his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep? and it shall come to pass, when he crieth unto me, that I will hear; for I *am* gracious.
- 28 Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.
- 29 Thou shalt not delay *to offer* the first of thy ripe fruits, and

“usurious”) convey the thought of an unduly high rate of interest for loan of money, but any payment exacted for a loan (for “use” of a thing—*usus*). That (De. xxiii. 20), in dealing with foreigners, was expressly permitted by God’s law. In itself (cp. Mat. xxv. 27), payment of interest for the use of money is like payment of rent for the use of land, a business transaction which may be profitable and convenient for both parties, and an advantage to the community through facilitating business (“circulation”). In the text the case contemplated (as also *e.g.* in Lev. xxv. 35 and De. xv. 7) appears to be that, not of ordinary business, but of a neighbour in real distress of straitened circumstances, helped “at a pinch.” Now the Israelites all were brethren by law and covenant; and it seems to have become a recognised custom among them, if not a law, that no interest should be taken for loan of money to an Israelite (cp. Ps. xv. 5). That custom or law would in a commercial community perhaps be a very bad one—*preventing* loan in the ordinary way of business (stopping “circulation”). *Raiment in pledge: pawn*, not lent for use, but (pledge) deposited as a security for repayment of loan. In this very simple case the “humane” comes out with great force: God, from His tender heart, speaking to the very heart of selfish man (pointing to *the sore place*—that “finger,” cp. viii. 19). The *raiment* is the large loose plaid, blanket, or bournous, which can serve as outer garment through the day, and is indispensable as a covering and wrap through the night, in a country where the biting cold of night is sharpened by abrupt transition from the hard brilliant heat of day. The rhetoric in ver. 27 is singularly cogent. The present writer has known cases in which factory girls placed their Sunday clothes in pledge during the week, on condition of having the use of them for the Lord’s Day. The poor Israelite had secured to him by the merciful Redeemer and King, inalienably, the use of his covering for the night: beyond that, it remained in pledge till the loan was repaid. 28–31. Here is a transition (which perhaps—as the unjust judge knows—is not abrupt) from sacredness of regard for man to sacredness in the manifested fear of God. *The gods* in our Version is probably a mis-translation. The Heb. word is *Elohim*, without the definite article; and probably the ordinary translation, *God* (sing. for plur.), is best here. “The gods” of the heathen seem out of place here, especially as being commended to the reverence of the people of Jehovah. And *elohim* elsewhere does not mean “judges” (as in ver. 9), unless it have the definite article. The meaning thus appears to be, Thou shalt not bring dishonour upon God,—by such action as “cursing the ruler of thy people.” *Ruler* here is lit. lofty one among the people,—one in a position calling for “honour” (1 Pe. ii. 17; cp. Act. xxv. 5) (a *blackguard* it is that “throws rotten eggs at

of thy liquors : the first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto  
 30 me. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen, *and* with thy  
 sheep : seven days it shall be with his dam ; on the eighth  
 day thou shalt give it me.

31 And ye shall be holy men unto me : neither shall ye eat  
*any* flesh *that is* torn of beasts in the field ; ye shall cast it to  
 the dogs.

CHAP. XXIII. 1. Thou shalt not raise a false report : put not  
 thine hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness.<sup>7</sup>

2 Thou shalt not follow a multitude to *do* evil ; neither shalt  
 thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest *judgment* :

3 Neither shalt thou countenance a poor man in his cause.

4 If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou  
 5 shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass

a gentleman"). *Ripe fruits, liquors* : lit. fulnesses and droppings ("like tears"—the norm occurs only here). *Delay* means slackness, cp. 2 Co. ix. 7. *Of thy sons* : see under xiii. 2, 12. The first-fruit of everything was given to the Lord. *Seven days* : this provided a relief of nature for the dam ; and there was a sort of "impurity" connected with birth. *Holy men* : the external observances of this kind had the intended effect of maintaining the outward separateness of Israel, which was a constant reminder of inward spiritual consecration. *Torn of beasts* : an animal so killed would have blood remaining in it, so as to be unclean ; and it might be further made unclean by contact of the beast of prey. *To the dogs* : acting simply as scavengers, so as to clear away the unclean thing. (See note on our relationship to lower animals under ix. 1-7.) In ancient literature the dog only once appears in the relation so familiar and pleasant to us, of humble friend of man ; namely, on the return of Odysseus as a wandering beggar : the hero is recognised, after twenty years of absence, only by an aged dog, which dies in the feeble effort of recognition.

Part II. : xxiii. 1-9. There is here a general reference to the judicial action which pervades the life of a community, even apart from the formality of courts and judges. Even the neighbourly duty of helping when the ass has fallen, thus received a specialty of colouring from the setting : the man is acting as a citizen of the nation. And the injunction regarding the stranger is seen to be, not a mere repetition of xxii. 21, but a distinct specific prescription to the same general effect.

1-3. An application of the principle of the Ninth Commandment. 1. Originating a calumny is here regarded as paving the way to false accusation before the judge or court, where the calumniator will be a *witness*, in a "case" he has made ready to the hand of the *wicked*. 2. Do not go with the stream in wrong-doing. *Decline* here means, turn aside from the straight path, to turn aside (same word) justice. 3. *Countenance* : few—our, so as to be partial in judgment, cp. ver. 6. *Cause* : "case" (at law). Strict justice is what is good in the seat of judgment : bias, of feeling for the poor, is in that place a corrupt sentimentalism ; like our stealing for the purpose of giving to the poor. 4, 5. A homely anticipation of Mat. v. 44, where



- of him that hateth thee lying under his burden, and wouldest  
 6 forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him. Thou  
 7 shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause. Keep  
 thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous  
 slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked.  
 8 And thou shalt take no gift; for the gift blindeth the wise,  
 and perverteth the words of the righteous.  
 9 Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger: for ye know the  
 heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of

Christ gives in a general form the same *lex talionis* which Moses (here) had given in particular cases of real life. Observe that the neighbour here is shown simply as *needing help* (cp. Lu. x. 30-33); as also are his beasts. In ver. 5 there is a climax: the *enemy* (one hated) is actively hostile. The *beast* is in sore distress; and the help extends to peaceful *contact* of the foes. *Forbear—surely*: see the same struggle (of old Adam with new) in Ro. vii. 23; but here the new Adam comes from *Sinai* (Ex. xx. 2; cp. I Jn. ii. 7, 8). *With him*: “lend us a hand”—in neighbourliness—*touch* the enemy! The suggestion is, that hands would *have* to meet in jointly raising the fallen ass. 6, 7. Here still there is reference to public justice: *cause* is “case.” *Thy poor!* the nation, the capable citizen, is guardian trustee of the helpless (Job xxix. 13). Still, no *wresting, twisting* either way: e.g. no sentimental partisanship *for* the poor, much less corruption of bias *against* him. *Keep—matter*: “odi profanum”—the generality of expression here seems to represent a heart hatred of all falsehood (cp. Achilles, “hating a lie as the gates of hell”). But the drift of falsehood in courts of judgment is toward judicial murder (cp. Jn. viii. 44). And the *earthly* judge or juryman has not the last word: *I—wicked*. The use of the word *justify* here is a case in point of the important question of Biblical interpretation, whether “justify” (e.g. in Ro., Ga., and James) is not to be taken in a declaratory, forensic sense (cp. Mat. xi. 19, xviii. 14). Here the sword is “two-edged”:—(1) Don’t overstrain, for fear of letting the guilty escape: God will take care of *that*; and your warrant ends where there is not clear evidence. (2) *You* are condemned as wicked if you condemn the innocent—Pilate *cannot* wash away that stain. 8. The *gift*, in this case, is a *bribe*: it cannot be anything else. *N.B.*—Let the judge have a sufficient salary: still, though he starve, he must not sell justice. It may be sold for popularity, or private favour—e.g. in voting for a councillor or M.P. 9. The *stranger* now (cp. xxii. 21) is seen, not simply as liable to annoyance as “a foreigner” or outsider, but as needing to be guarded against the grave wrong of *public injustice*: *oppression* abstractly is, burden beyond what is necessary and right; here it is pointed to the specific sense of the civil government being perverted to that effect, the sword of justice thus put into a robber’s hand—or, Justice herself turning robber. The Heb. for *heart* here is lit. *life*: the meaning is represented by “*soul* of a stranger”—as when the iron went into *your soul* in Egypt.

#### Exercise 40.

1. *Non ignara mali, miseris succurrere disco* (“Having experience of evils, I learn to succour the unhappy”). (1) Who said this? (2) Give two texts

10 Egypt. And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt  
 11 gather in the fruits thereof: but the seventh *year* thou shalt  
 let it rest and lie still; that the poor of thy people may eat:  
 and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like

in which a like thing is said about a person who is God. (3) Distinguish pity (which may be in God) from sympathy (which can be only in a man).

2. "The greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind." Who was that? What abuse in public administration is memorably illustrated in his life?
3. "Love me, love my dog." In respect of opportunities of thus coming into friendly intercourse, show what advantages the condition of mankind on earth has over that of ghosts.
4. How do you account for the absence of instructions for a "ghostly" godliness?

**Outlook for Israel (10-33).** Here the legislation has a distinct view to Israel as in occupation of the promised land; but only *such* a view as might well have been taken by covenants in Sinai: there is nothing in the natural Palestinian condition here presupposed that would not have presented itself to the mind of any intelligent Israelite before leaving Egypt. The view here given of the situation, as compared with the preceding instructions regarding detail, may be said to be what the earth's yearly movement round the sun is as compared with her daily revolution round her own axis. It is all one life; in which the greater movements and the minor are vitally correlated, each to each, as "love" is to "keeping the commandments of God." That life, beginning with individual beneficence, is exhibited in ever widening views, as when one ascends from the plain toward a mountain summit. But of the views thus expanding, there are two distinct though connected series. 1st, Of Israel's *internal action*, vers. 10-19; and 2nd, Of Israel's *external relations* to the world as under government of God, vers. 20-33. A similar view of future Israelitish life is given in Ex. xxxiv. with variations which can be noted there.

1st, *Internal action* of Israel's life, vers. 10-19. The life here is, first, *private* (vers. 10-13), beginning with *individual* beneficence as represented by the year of rest for the land, and extending to the weekly Sabbath, of rest from the continuous toil of life, a rest in which the *family* is conspicuously embraced (a matter which is here irrespectively of the Fourth Commandment). Secondly, the same life appears as *public* national (vers. 14-19); so that society is embraced in every mode, the nation appearing as a great family of Jehovah, while the family is a little kingdom of God. "Oh! day of rest and gladness." It is worth noting how the sort of "taxation" in vers. 10-13 is truly a "rest" of the Lord's redeemed (Re. xxii. 3); and the great national acts of "service" and homage to God are festive (Re. vii. 15). The *frame* in which Israel's detailed life was set is singularly beautiful: "Happy is the people that is in such a case, whose God is Jehovah."

10-13. The number *seven* (under xvi. 22-30) here appears as playing a great part in Israel's life of religion: that true life of Israel which *is* religion (1 Pe. ii. 4, 5). The number is made up of 3 and 4: 3, associated with the idea of divine perfections, perhaps also with that of plurality of divine persons; and 4 (cp. Re. iv. 6), supposed to represent the kingdoms of nature; while the whole number 7 is found where man and his world are in the right normal relation (of covenant) to Jehovah-God as the Sovereign of the universe. In the *Sabbath* (see notes under xx., Fourth Com.) we see that the rest, which is constituted for man by that relationship (He. iv. 3), though now (Mk. ii. 27, 29) in effect a gift of redemption, is yet, like the family, a constitution founded in nature, now restored by grace. It is to be observed, as the true

manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, *and* with thy olive-  
 12 yard. Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh  
 day thou shalt rest; that thine ox and thine ass may rest,  
 and the son of thy handmaid and the stranger may be re-  
 13 freshed. And in all *things* that I have said unto you be  
 circumspect: and make no mention of the name of other  
 gods, neither let it be heard out of thy mouth.  
 14 Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year.

*principle* of the Sabbatism here (see the exposition by the Lord of the Sabbath, Mat. xii., "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice") that it is especially destined to operate in beneficence to the helpless dependent; even (ver. 11) to wild animals. This (witness, Act. xx. 35), the fifth Gospel "according to" Paul the magnanimous, is the distinctively godlike thing in a man (Mat. v. 43-48; 1 Co. xiii. 13—"the *greatest*" alone is eternal). The life here prescribed to Israel is the "blessed" life. 10, 11. In Lev. xxv. 2-5, this law is *expressly* made prospective toward Canaan. It is not absolutely certain that in the year of rest the land was simply left unwrought. It is barely possible that the meaning should be, that (*thou*) the owner of the land should in that year leave the use of it to others, allowing them to crop it. But it is most likely, so as to be nearly certain, that the land was allowed literally to rest; which, with perhaps no prescribed rotation in ordinary years, might be good farming; while the septennial break in a farmer's own life might help to save from cloddishness, of a "soul" that naturally "cleaveth to the dust" (Ps. cxix. 25). Without any formality of sowing, there might in that climate be large increase for one year. It is very remarkable that *the beasts of the field* should be invited to share in the feast of nature's lord (Ro. viii. 22; cp. ver. 21 and Lu. xiv. 12-14). Christians are a Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. *Vineyard—oliveyard*. Corn, wine, and oil are the whole wealth of the land in question. An Israelite who owned property other than land could easily calculate how much of it to consecrate to charity (even a Pharisee could, Lu. xviii. 12). 12. See also xxxiv. 21, and under xvi. 21-30 note on Sabbath as a *specifically national constitution*. It is mere perversity to regard the insertion of the seventh-day rest here as *inadvertent* of the Fourth Commandment. Assuming that Commandment, the rest comes here in its place, as part of the picture of that happy life which God gives into the keeping of His Israel. The septennial rest brings into view only the individual: here the family is seen, in that perennial life of blessed homes which are fountains of health to the community (Ge. xxii. 18). Still, mark the emphasis on benefit to *others*. 13. *Circumspect* here is, on guard, watching one's whole life in its outgoings. *Neither—mouth* (cp. Ps. xvi. 4); keep well away from the subject, here evidently means, keep at a distance from the thing—even in conversation. See note under xix. 13; and observe that *stoning* to death is avoidance of contact. It may *have* to be touched as a leprous garment; but then there may be real feeling, and manifestation of loathing toward the thing, e.g. covetousness, Eph. v. 3; cp. Lu. xvi. 14 (*our* idolatry).

14-19. This still includes the whole of Israel's life, and brings the transcendentalism of religion into the round of it (cp. 1 Pe. ii. 12-iii. 9). But now we see the *nation* as a whole rejoicing in its King (Ps. cxlix. 2), and

- 15 Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread : (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib ; for in it thou camest out from Egypt : and none shall appear before me empty :)  
 16 and the feast of harvest, the first-fruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in thy field : and the feast of ingathering, *which is* in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in

doing Him homage. Every nation, as a moral personality, is entitled to worship God, and bound to conform to His will ; and similarly, every individual in his citizen capacity has right to serve God, and is bound to worship Him by open professed obedience to His will. But Israel was a theocracy ; so that sin was rebellion against the chief magistrate of the nation, and a crime against the civil law was *as such* a sin against God. The whole round of the nation's life is here represented by the three great festivals, connected respectively with the beginning, the fulness, and the ingathering of that fruitfulness of the earth on which man's life depends. The festivals here specified were to be attended by all (adult) males, "before the Lord," that is, at the place of His dwelling ; and had a distinct reference to His goodness as the lord of life, in covenant faithfulness as the Redeemer. The keynote of true Israelitish life, as thus festive in the round of it, was struck in the Passover, with which the true Israelitish year began. But *the sphere* of the transcendental life is in the common things (Ga. ii. 20 ; 1 Pe. ii. 12-iii. 9). The "year" (ver. 17) which is rounded (see "the end," ver. 16) here is simply that of the world's life as resulting in the food of man, at the various stages from the first appearance of the harvest to its final completion. It is remarkable how greatly the simple providing of bread still occupies the life of mankind : if men no longer used food, almost the whole "business" of the world would stop. 14. *Feast.* (Other festivals were prescribed later.) Gladness, not gloom, is the spirit of this religion (Mat. ix. 15). But the joy is that of the Lord as King (Ps. cxlix. 2). The Heb. word for *times* here (lit. *feet*) shows *journeys* on foot (blind Bartimæus heard it). 15. On the Passover, here, *feast of unleavened bread*, see Introduction (pp. 81-84) and commentary on chaps. xii., xiii. *None—empty* : that is, not without a free-will offering (De. xvi. 16, 17). This was required at all feasts. A gift is Oriental homage to a king. *Israel's gift* (cp. 1 Co. xvi. 3 along with the preceding verse) owned the redeeming grace of the Sovereign. 16. The details regarding these two feasts are given in Le. xxiii. 34 and Nu. xxix. 12. *Of harvest* : in Ex. xxxiv., "of weeks" (lit. "of sevens"). It is not known that the giving of the law on Sinai was on the fiftieth day after the Passover in Egypt. (*Pentecost* is Greek for "fiftieth.") The revealed reference of this festival is to the life of the year in experience of God's redeemed. The Passover festival began with earliest harvest, when *barley* was first ripe. This feast of weeks would be at the completion of the corn-harvest ; like the English "harvest home." It was peculiarly gladsome in form : held only for one day. *Ingathering* is more commonly, of "tabernacles." It would correspond to the somewhat later time of the vintage ; but the prescription is not so pointed. *When thou hast gathered, when thou gatherest* (so in Rev. Vers.) : at the gathering season. "End of the year" (in early October) is, of course, not the end of the true Israelitish year, which begins in late April.



17 thy labours out of the field. Three times in the year all thy  
 18 males shall appear before the Lord God. Thou shalt not  
 offer the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread; neither  
 19 shall the fat of my sacrifice remain until the morning. The  
 first of the first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the  
 house of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not seethe a kid in  
 his mother's milk.

What is meant is, the winding up of the farming year, in its concluding operations of the "gathering." The people made themselves booths, in memory of the primaeval tent-life of their fathers. That may be a natural festivity (Homer so has the vintage "gathering"). But in Israel's festivity the life ascended to its fountain (Je. ii. 13; Re. xxi. 6).

17-19. It has been observed that the three prescriptions in vers. 18, 19 respectively bear upon the three festivals of vers. 14-16 in their order. And it may be suggested that ver. 17 corresponds to ver. 14. (The Heb. for *times*, however, here has not the reference to feet.) The Heb. for *God* here is not the common *Elohim*, but *adōn*, "lord"—that which in Ps. xlv. 11 describes a royal bridegroom (Is. lxi. 10): which gives a vivid impression of what the great yearly gatherings were, to those who (cp. 1 Pet. i. 3, 4) were "meet for the inheritance of the saints in (O. T.) light." Such national religious festivals are in the *life* of other peoples—but (Ps. lxxviii. 16). 18. *My sacrifice* here manifestly is, the paschal lamb; see xxxiv. 25 (cp. Jn. i. 29; 1 Co. v. 7; Lu. ix. 31). The *fat* is not specified in xii. 10; and here, *fat* may mean simply the *best* (of the feast), that is, the lamb itself. The prescription to consume the fat by burning it was common to sacrifices, not peculiar to the paschal lamb. The *with* here is lit. *on*, which does not affect the meaning. 19. *God* is here (as usual, but see under ver. 17) *Elohim*. *House of—God*. This stands for what elsewhere is more generally, "the place which Jehovah shall select to put His name in it" (De. xii. 5, 11, 14, etc.; cp. Jn. iv. 22). Instead of *the land* here, there is *thy labours* in ver. 16; here the genus, there the species. *The first* (of the *first-fruits*, a different word in origin) may mean (the "prime") the *best*, not simply "the earliest." But "earliest" is parallel to Ex. xxii. 29, and would inculcate really the same spirit as *best*. The special connexion of the prohibition about a *kid* with the feast of Tabernacles is not obvious. The question of real significance is as to its meaning. It is three times emitted by Moses (here; in Ex. xxxiv. 26; De. xiv. 21). An obvious meaning is, prohibition of what has a revolting aspect of unnaturalness. Some see in it a positive *cruelty*, in the early separation of a dam from its young. Others find a specific connexion with idolatrous feasting. There is no authoritative determination of the question.

**NOTE ON THE FESTIVAL SYSTEM.**—There were various festivals prescribed by God, which must have been good for those to whom He prescribed them. They were not found good (iv. 10) for those to whom (Col. ii. 17) He did not prescribe them. Such were for Gentiles under the New Testament, "Sabbaths" made for Hebrews under the Old Testament. "The Sabbath made for man" must be always good for men—to keep, not, to break.

#### Exercise 41.

1. *Ingenuus didicisse fideliter artes*, etc. "Liberal culture softens the manners, and makes human cruelty impossible." (1) Prove from this that Roman



- 20 Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.  
 21 Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name *is* in him.  
 22 But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an  
 23 adversary unto thine adversaries. For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites,

“civilisation” was barbarous; (2) Illustrate “the milk of human kindness” in Mosaism.

2. Sources of a people’s wealth. (1) Name some in the land besides those above specified; (2) Some in the sea; (3) Some in the air. Show how these could be devoted to God.
3. (1) What is there of *divinely prescribed festival* in the new dispensation? (2) John Owen says that the assumption of Church power to decree rites and ceremonies has been productive of vast evils to mankind. Make a statement on the subject.

2nd, **Israel’s external relations** under guardian providence of Jehovah (20–33). This “little flock” has to travel through the wilderness amid wolves. In Canaan a heathen power has to be overcome; and has to be guarded against when surrounding this isolated people as a raging sea, and enveloping its true life as a poisonous atmosphere. The one protection, of shield and sword, of inward health as well as outward fencing, is Jehovah Himself; and Israel’s one way of ever having that protection is, holding on by that Jehovah, as God, to be alone trusted and obeyed. This is brought vividly into view by the appearance of the angel, and the description of the “fear.”

NOTE on *Exodus Angelophany* (xiv. 19).

20. *An angel* (under xxxii. 34) here is lit. a messenger. But here in action he appears (vers. 20–23) as God, the keeper of Israel, with whom pardon lies, and of whom it is said that, when He leads Israel, God cuts off the foes. He has appeared in each action to Israel at the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 19), and will so appear at the entrance into Canaan (Josh. v. 14, cp. vi. 2). An angel had appeared to the patriarchs who was God (*e.g.* Ge. xvi. 10; cp. 13, xxxi. 11, xxxii. 24, cp. 28–30). Underlying the series of representations is the fact, that Israel was dealt with by Jehovah through a person, “the angel of Jehovah,” whom we know to be Christ (1 Co. x. 5, 9, the various reading, “the Lord,” in ver. 9, leaves the sense of the passage unaltered as to this point). *Keep—bring*. The nature of this promised action is exhibited in the detail which follows, of (cp. Mat. xxviii. 20) ever-present guardianship, of protection and blessing, as well as guidance. 21. *Beware—my name*. This is the description of a *person* who is God; Israel may have distinctly in view only the awfulness of divine attribute and prerogative in Him. The “name” here is decisively significant of Godhead. 22. Here the “messenger” is made equivalent to God; but all ambassadors are thus representative of the king. The point here is, *submission* in order to salvation. *Adversary* here is lit. *oppressor*, which makes the rhetoric more vivid, showing “poetical justice” in providence (Ps. xviii. 26). 23. *Amorites*, etc. (under iii. 8). These were the peoples *within* the Jordan boundary of

- 24 and the Jebusites ; and I will cut them off. Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works ; but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite  
 25 break down their images. And ye shall serve the Lord your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water ; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.
- 26 There shall nothing cast their young, nor be barren, in thy  
 27 land : the number of thy days I will fulfil. I will send my fear before thee, and will destroy all the people to whom thou shalt come ; and I will make all thine enemies turn their backs

Canaan proper. What is now in view is the "objective point" of the divine leading: the trans-Jordanic peoples displaced by the two and a half tribes thus do not come into view. At ver. 28, where there is no call for a full catalogue of the peoples, the *samples* named may be of peoples peculiarly strong or otherwise conspicuous from the present point of view. *Cut them off.* See at close of xi., note on the *Midnight Cry*.

NOTE ON "EXTIRPATION" OF THE CANAANITES.—In fact, they were not destroyed individually, but as peoples. Individuals of heathen birth or extraction are frequently found installed in the "commonwealth of Israel," for which there was provision from the outset in the ordinances of the Passover and of circumcision. And the "stranger," so carefully guarded in the legislation of the Book of the Covenant, is not a traveller from some remote land, but a resident in Canaan who is not an adopted Israelite. The "extirpation" has for its purpose, while punishing, that *no heathen power* shall have place in the holy land.

24. A heathen power in the land would be in effect heathenism tempting the chosen people. The utter destruction, here so powerfully described, of the *images*, would bring "the gods" into contempt; and the desolation of the places of worship would destroy the idolatry ("Pull down," said Knox, "the nests, and the rooks will fly away"). The *breaking* (under xxxii. 20) had to go as near as possible to the annihilation of the very matter of those images (defaced in form). They were reduced to ashes, so as to be blown away by the wind. This no doubt was a lesson of deep horror of false religion, which many Christians have failed to learn. 25, 26. "First endure, then pity, then embrace." So Israel came to embrace—death (Hos. xiii. 9). Yet here at the outset had been shown the way of life and health. A "heart hatred" of false religion is a wholesome thing (Reason annexed to the Second Commandment). To be in a right relation to God is to be in the way of a blessing on our livelihood, and of obtaining the full use of our life. In a people, true religion promotes temporal prosperity, even the health of the community, so that "useful lives" are long "spared" to it. Ungodliness ruins everything. Not only is this the law of general providence, it is the expressly intimated purpose and effect of a special providence (Mat. vi. 33; 1 Ti. iv. 8; Ro. viii. 28). 27. *My fear* (cp. De. ii. 25, xi. 25; 1 Ch. xiv. 17). The "fear," so vividly depicted in connexion with the giving of the law at Sinai, was intended to, and has been, in fact, an abiding element at the foundation and heart of true religion. And the manifest effect of a real dread of Jehovah, Israel's God, upon peoples whom Israel overcame, is one of the proofs of a veritable supernatural manifestation of God in Israel's movement at the beginning. It seems to have remained long in Canaan;

- 28 unto thee. And I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite, and the Hittite, from  
 29 before thee. I will not drive them out from before thee in one year; lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the  
 30 field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and  
 31 inherit the land. And I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river: for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand; and thou shalt drive them out before thee.  
 32 Thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor with their gods.  
 33 They shall not dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sin

centuries after the conquest it was (1 Sa. iv.) in the desperation of the valiant Philistines. Perhaps it has never left the world. The dreadful persecutions of the primitive Church at the hand of heathen "powers" have some features of a desperation of secret terror. And two distinguished historians (Tacitus and Suetonius) of the heathen Roman empire mention, in connexion with Christianity, a rumour that had gone over the East, that a power, rising in Judea, was destined to supremacy of the world. It will be remembered that "fear" was one of the precursors of belief in connexion with the miracles of Christ (on *têras*, their name of terror, see in Intro. pp. 78-80). The *hornet* (De. vii. 20; Josh. xxiv. 12) here (sing. for the species) has by some been understood to mean, a literal hornet, or venomous flying insect (see in Comm. Plague of flies). In such a land and climate, such a plague might be really and literally terrific. In two or three years a few bumble-bees, introduced into New Zealand, had multiplied so as to be seen in every garden in that land, larger than Britain; and one who knows the land has said, that the introduction of a pair of wasps would speedily empty it of human population (Homer says that the wasp is "the most valiant" of creatures). But evidently, in the history of the actual conquest, the only creature weapon employed by Jehovah was the sword of Joshua. What the hornet represents is a vague apprehension, that *cannot be fought against*, filling the atmosphere of men's minds with a nameless panic. Whether there was a direct operation, causing terror within their minds, on the part of that omnipresent Spirit who divided the Jordan, and made the walls of Jericho fall down, and the sun and moon stand still, we need not inquire. 29, 30. *Not—in one year.* The primary conquest occupied a generation. The work was not completed till the taking of Jebus (Jerusalem), four centuries after Joshua, under a greater captain. In a thinly-peopled hot country, wild animals have been known historically as formidable rivals to man. 31. This promise was literally fulfilled in the times of David and Solomon. *Sea of the Philistines*—the Mediterranean, their land was on the border of it, so that the Crusaders first seized the towns there. *Here the "Red Sea"* cannot be Brugsch's Egyptian lake country (Intro. pp. 44-46). *The river* is here *ha-nahar*, which in the Pentateuch always means the Euphrates (when "the river" means "Nile," the word in Pent. is *y'ôr*). *The desert* here manifestly is the Sinaitic region south of Palestine. 32, 33. See above under ver. 23 (*cut off*). Here still the prohibition is of fraternizing with a *heathen power*. The broken remains of Palestinian heathenism,

against me : for if thou serve their gods, it will surely be a snare unto thee.

CHAP. XXIV. I. And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the

which did not amalgamate with Israel, may have gone toward the formation of some heathen power farther north, such as a Hittite empire on the Orontes. But that does not come into view of the Old Testament history of the chosen people. What we see, after the "seven nations," is, first, the strong Philistine heathenism of the south-west, then the Tyrian (later Phœnician) civilisation to the north-west ; after which we come into sight of Syria, and then Assyria and the world-empires of Daniel.

NOTE on the conquest of Canaan (on the *strategics*, concluding note on xvii.).—The suggestion of a preparation for it by means of an Egyptian raid into Palestine, breaking the spirit of the population during the wilderness sojourning of Israel, has no interest beyond mere antiquarianism (unless there be a psychological interest in the natural history of arbitrary suggestions). As of the Passage of the Red Sea, so of this conquest, while we have no scriptural permission to multiply miracles, neither have we any call, of reason or of Scripture, to make things possible for the Almighty. It is the impossible that He goes out of His way to do. The memory of an Egyptian raid did not dry up Jordan with wonder, nor shake down Jericho's walls with terror, nor make the sun and moon stand still with awe. These are the "signs" pointing to the distinctive character of this war, which makes Joshua to have a specifically different significance from Cortez or Garibaldi. Once the heart of heathenism was broken in Palestine, and David and Solomon were in commanding force there, there apparently was no opposition force that could prevent their sway from extending over the whole region between the Euphrates and the Nile basins.

#### Exercise 42.

1. Give texts that promise protection against wild animals of three species.
2. Compare the projected invasion of Palestine with Mahommedan wars of conquest under the Khalifs.
3. Describe the policy for Great Britain toward heathen peoples within the empire that would follow from the prescription here ; explaining how, or in what measure, Britain's policy ought to be influenced by difference in its circumstances from those of Israel.

THE SEALING OF THE COVENANT (xxiv.).—Having been so much occupied with that covenant, we need only note the specialities here emerging in connexion with what has been described as the sealing of it. The narrative here is twofold : 1. *The transaction*, vers. 1-8 ; and 2. *The sequel* of the transaction, vers. 9-18. The connexion of the two is very simple : 1. The people engage to conform implicitly to the mind of God ; and 2. Moses goes into God's presence from them, and thus is in the way of learning for them explicitly what is that mind.

1st, *The Transaction* (1-8). There is here presupposed the assent of the parties ; God offering, and man accepting ; but the speciality is the *formality* of assenting. And in the formality, while again there precedes, the word of God, with a responding word of man, the speciality is the solemn **act of ratification**, in which both are included by the sprinkling of the blood of the covenant (Ps. l. 5).

1, 2. The arrangement prescribed here is not carried out until the transaction is completed : on which account some have thought that the two verses have got displaced, from between the 8th and 9th verses. The arrange-

Lord, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of  
 2 the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses  
 alone shall come near the Lord, but they shall not come  
 nigh; neither shall the people go up with him.  
 3 And Moses came and told the people all the words of the  
 Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered  
 with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath  
 4 said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord,  
 and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under  
 the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of  
 5 Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel,  
 which offered burnt-offerings, and sacrificed peace-offerings  
 6 of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood,  
 and put *it* in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on  
 7 the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in  
 the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord

ment might have been made before the transaction was begun; there is no need of meddling with the text. *Nadab and Abihu*: Aaron's two oldest sons might have been his successors in the high-priesthood, but perished on account of offering "strange fire,"—an event which ministers of religion might in our time do well to remember. *Seventy*: the number of seventy has a place in Israel's history like that of twelve. It may have arisen from the number of heads of houses (see under i. 5) at the original settlement in Goshen. It has been observed that on this occasion, taking in Aaron's sons, the seventy-two make six for every tribe; so that there may have been a representative delegation on the occasion. *Moses alone—with him*. The people, we may suppose, remained outside of the barrier (under xix. 12, 13), while the elders and others remained near the foot of the mount within the barrier, and Moses went up toward the most holy ground.

3. *Words—judgments*. "Words" are more general (than "laws," as laws are) than "judgments." But here the declaration is divine, as well as the thing declared. *Told*: not necessarily repeated: may have been only given an account of,—that is, at least, of all the laws and other "words" recorded in chaps. xxi.—xxiii. The contents of xix. and xx. were previously known to the people. On this response, see under xix. 8; but now he *binds* them to it. 4. On *writing*, under xvii. 14; and *altar*, ver. 15 and under xxvii. 1–8. The prescription for an altar is in xx. 24. The arrangement was for the highest act of solemnity. The first part of the solemnity was, writing this nucleus of the actual Book of Exodus (whether xix.—xxiii. or only xxi.—xxiii.). *Twelve*, representing the tribes, and thus meaning all Israel (cp. Josh. iv.), distinctly pledged in its divisions. 5. The *young men* here, before there is a priestly tribe, serving at the altar for the occasion, are not represented as permanent officials of any class or qualification beyond fitness for this particular piece of work. *Burnt*, representing consecration to God the Redeemer; and *peace*, communion with Him in redeeming love. 6–8. *In the audience*, lit. "in the ears." There is a solemnity in the formality of reading (cp. the protest of the German Reformers). The people's



8 hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words.

9 Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and  
10 seventy of the elders of Israel; and they saw the God of Israel: and *there was* under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in *his*

response is here laid before God, as in xix. 8, with a more impressive solemnity, the essence of which is in *the blood of the Covenant* (He. x. 29), the quintessence of sacredness in freely contracted obligation. The sacrifice on this occasion of *constituting* the covenant relationship is the one sacrifice which under the Old Testament did not require to be repeated. It was the foundation of all. The blood of sacrifice, representing *life* offered for sin, is immediately for the altar, as the offering is unto God. But in this case He, the primary Covenantor (see Introd., note on *Covenant*, pp. 70-72), here appears as bringing men into most vitally close relation to Himself, making them one with Himself in the essential transaction (Is. lv. 3). In heathen lands men employed bleeding sacrifice in the sealing of compacts, with various shades of meaning. There was always in that form the substance of meaning, the highest conceivable degree of sacredness in binding parties to the contract. Here, the living God, as if swearing by Himself in what is most sacred, shows what is the most sacred "mystery" of revealed religion, namely, *propitiation* through bleeding sacrifice. And men, accepting this His Covenant, set their seal to what springs to man from the most sacred fountain of new life, namely, *obligation to obey* the revealed will of God (Ga. iv. 6; I Pe. i. 15-21): the expression is literally "upon all these words,"—on the footing of them all. The sprinkling on *the people* is in Heb. (ix. 19) made to reach "*the book and all the people*," and there are details given of the process which are not specified in Exodus. The details may have been learned from prescriptions regarding propitiatory sacrifice in general; while Exodus specifies only the *peculiarities* in this case. The people were sprinkled, apparently in their representatives, perhaps the pillars. Though they could not distinctly hear the reading, nor be individually reached with the blood, every one, in the "solidarity" of the common action, was reached and bound in his individual conscience toward *man* as well as God.

2nd, *The sequel* to the transaction (9-18). Here the arrangement in vers. 1, 2 is carried out. From ver. 13 it appears that *Joshua* was present where he is not named; he was there, not as a distinct party, co-ordinate with the others, but as *servant* ("acolyte") of Moses. The order of procedure was, that this whole group went past the barrier *on* to the basis of the sacred mount; and that Moses thence proceeded further "*up into* the mount of God."

9-11. *Saw*: apprehended immediately, or without the veiling medium of symbols (cp. I Co. xiii. 12): as, *e.g.*, creatures may in heaven see God. The suggestion, that the Divine Being assumed some aspect of corporeal visibility, is grass confusion (cp. Jn. iv. 24). *The feet*, cp. xxxiv. 5, and notes on the *Kappōreth*, xxv. The Heb. has no *pavement*: but, as it were *sapphire work*. *The body of heaven*: as if, *ipsissima corpora*, "the very heaven," in its clear

- 11 clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand : also they saw God, and did eat and drink.
- 12 And the Lord said unto Moses, Come up to me into the mount, and be there : and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written ; that
- 13 thou mayest teach them. And Moses rose up, and his minister Joshua ; and Moses went up into the mount of God.
- 14 And he said unto the elders, Tarry ye here for us, until we come again unto you : and, behold, Aaron and Hur *are* with you ; if any man have any matters to do, let him come unto

deep blue (the most *spiritual* thing in physical nature) : the aspect of that on which His feet were, was as if it were another sky, — to go farther is to vulgarize (under influence of tendency which Coleridge had to correct in his translation of Schiller's noblest poem—see Matthew Arnold's Essay on "the Celtic element" in English Literature). The *also* of A.V. in ver. 11 is for *v'* (under i. 1), and would be better simply, *and* (so in R.V.). It might be made *yea and*. The circumstance of breathless wonder is, that *they lived* while seeing God *they gazed upon* (cp. 1 Jn. i. 1) (the word for seeing is not the common one, which appears in ver. 10) (cp. Ge. xxxii. 30 ; Ex. xxxii. 20). The *panic terror* of man on account of manifested presence of God is ended (Re. i. 16, 17) for these Covenanters. But Israel's "nobles" on this occasion were not only spared that terror, but *blessed in the immediate presence of God*. This appears in their feasting in that presence (Ps. xvi. 11). They had not only the Israelitish normal happiness of believing (He. xi. 1), but the *bliss of seeing*, which is reserved for the true Israel. 12. See this promise fulfilled, xxxi. 18, and note. Here, *tables, law, and commandment* (as in R.V., not plur. as in A.V.) *which I have written*, all—we suppose—refer to the one thing, viz. the Decalogue ; in its place (*tables*), character (*law*), and contents (*commandment*) : the Heb. for *law* here (*Torah*, lit. "instruction") reappears in the Heb. word for *teach* here ("instruct"). A *law* is "instruction," as being *express intimation* (of duty prescribed) : thus, "to lay down the law" (our Japhetic word, *law, leg-*, is from a root (*leg-* or *lay*) which has the common meaning of, *saying a thing* (so in *leg-end*), and *laying it down* (*lex*, "law"). *Which I have written*, points the finger to the Decalogue (exclusively, Ex. xxxi. 18). To look for anything more here is arbitrary, and seems perverse. 13. See initial note here. *The mount of God* (under iii. 1) does not necessarily localize a particular peak (cp. 2 Pe. i. 18). It, the manifestation of Jehovah (Ex. iii. 5), that makes the "place." The point here is, Moses *going up* to where that manifestation was centred (as in Holy of Holies behind a veil). 14-18. *We come* : Moses and his (honoured) "servant." *Aaron and Hur* :—to be in the place of Moses under the Jethro constitution (Ex. xviii.). *If—do* : lit. *whoever (is) master of words*,—as if, "has a business to talk about." The *glory* is seen in 2 Co. iii. 18 ; where Moses saw it in the dawning of the new dispensation (Lu. ix. 30), along with one who, like himself (1 Ki. xix. 8), had been on that "mount of God," and had fasted forty days : as also (Mat. iv. 2) had that Son of man who (Lu. ix. 35) is the Son of God, and in whom they saw on earth the "glory" in which they now appeared from heaven. To this end they had always been pointing (Ro. iii. 21), though perhaps (1 Pe. i. 11) they did not clearly see it

15 them. And Moses went up into the mount, and a cloud  
 16 covered the mount. And the glory of the Lord abode upon  
 Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the  
 seventh day he called unto Moses out of the midst of the  
 17 cloud. And the sight of the glory of the Lord *was* like  
 devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the  
 18 children of Israel. And Moses went into the midst of the  
 cloud, and gat him up into the mount: and Moses was in the  
 mount forty days and forty nights.

on earth before, and (ver. 12) it may not be clearly "seen of angels" till the Son of man is glorified completely (1 Ti. iii. 16; He. i. 6). The *Mount Sinai* here is clearly a particular peak (say, *Jebel Mousa*) of *the mount* (ver. 15), Sinaitic mountain system or group (which in ver. 13, as in 1 Ki. xix. 8, may be "the mount of God"). The *cloud*, enveloping the group, would thus be like the Tabernacle veil, concealing the High Priest in the *adytum*; the elders being as the common priests in the Sanctuary, but outside of the veil; while the people (kept back by the barrier) were as in "the court of the Lord's House." The "glory" that was centred in that innermost shrine was perceived by the people:—we may suppose, mercifully softened to their view by the envelope of cloud, as the shining face of the reflexion of it was afterwards covered with a veil. The aspect it presented to their view gave to Israel a deep abiding sense of the holy "terror of the Lord" (thus in Is. vi. 5; and, as a theological commonplace of the Israelitish heart, in He. xii. 29, where vers. 25–28 point expressly to *this* occasion of the "for;" as more generally in He. x. 28–31). On looking more closely at Exodus, we perceive that Moses remained seven days as if in the sanctuary (which would place the elders in the "Court") before passing into the innermost presence for the forty days at the call of God. The people may have heard the call: while they perceived the awfulness of that presence into which "this Moses" (Ex. xxxii. 1) was going. When he remained so long out of their view, they may have thought he was "consumed" by that "fire;" as well they might (1 Ki. xviii. 38; 2 Ki. i. 10) if they had known themselves, as they did not know Jehovah (Mal. iii. 6), notwithstanding what they had been told regarding Him (Ex. iii. 2, cp. iv. 29–31).

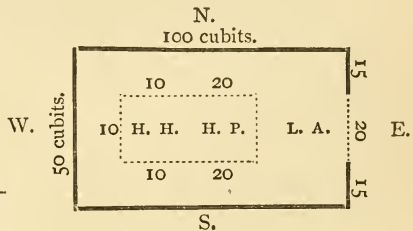
The simple sublimity of this narrative makes it almost profane to criticize it as literature. But we may ask, What soul of man was there in the world capable of mirroring what we see through this narrative? That which gave out the song of salvation (Ex. xv.), and gives it out (Re. xv. 3, 4).

### The Tabernacle History (Chaps. xxv.–xl.).

The subject of the Tabernacle has been considered in the Introduction (pp. 84–91) in its connection with the general system and course of Israel's life, which has its fontal centre here (Ps. xlvi. 4). We now shall concentrate our attention upon the *specialities* of that fabric itself. And we begin with observing the remarkable frequency with which it is described in the Scriptures, intended for mankind.

(1) Here in Exodus it is described twice over at full length in great detail. (2) There is careful description of the replica of it (see *Introd.*) in Solomon's Temple. (3) It appears in the idealized representation of Ezekiel. (4) It is the background of theological exposition in the great Epistle to the Hebrews (i.—x.). (5) Less formally, but really and completely, it gives colour and form to the whole of the experimental theology of Scripture, such as in the Psalms and Epistles; so that every Christian comes to have some "pattern" (He. viii. 5, where the Gr. word is *type*) of the Tabernacle in his heart. (6) Even in the unseen future world (Re. xx., xxi.) the description of the blessed eternal abode of the redeemed is obviously based on the form of the Tabernacle. Plainly, the Bible calls us to real study of that fabric.

**NOTE on the whole Tabernacle fabric.**—At some cost of future repetition, we will here endeavour to give a simple familiar outline of the whole, and of the main details in relation to the whole. We will take one thing at a time: remembering that the child, who tried to lift an armful of apples, got nothing; while a man, by lifting one at a time, would get the whole heap.



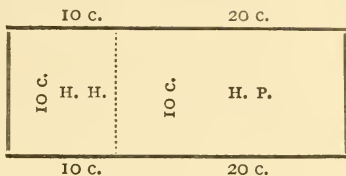
1. The quadrangle of 100 cubits by 50 is *the Court*, which is enclosed or fenced in by a sort of curtain-wall supported by pillars. In the middle of the east side (or end) toward which the Tabernacle always faced, there is a gate of 20 cubits wide; so that on either hand of it the Court fence reaches to 15 cubits from the corner. When that gate is entered, there are found within the Court only three things; namely, at the west end, or back, of the Court, the Tabernacle or Tent Dwelling; and, between the gate and that Dwelling, first, nearest the gate, the Altar of burnt-sacrifice (A.), and second, nearest the Dwelling, the Laver or Bath (L.). The precise distance of these three things from the gate, we do not at present inquire about. We place them provisionally all in one line.

**NOTE on Cubit.**—As for the cubit measure, we do not need to care whether it is 15, or 18, or 21 inches. A likeness picture is made, not by equality of size to the original, but by uniformity of scale in the details. If things be in the same proportion, according to any one measure, that is all that we need in order to see the Tabernacle "figure" (He. ix. 9). Mr. Gillies nowhere needs any smaller measure than  $\frac{1}{4}$  cubit. And in order to our seeing that "figure," it makes no difference to us whether the cubit of which that is a quarter is 15 inches, or 18, or 21: only let it always be the same cubit—we will suppose, 18 inches.

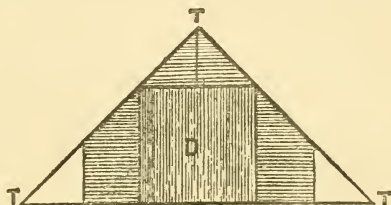
That curtain-wall round the Court is 5 cubits high. And the number 5, thus presenting itself at first sight of the structure from the outside, is found continually repeating itself all over the structure and all through it. Everywhere we find "multiples" of 5. Thus, as to that Court: its length is 20 times 5 cubits, and its breadth 10 times 5; and the gate on the east side is 4 times 5 cubits, while there is 3 times 5 cubits of curtain-wall on each side of that gate.

2. Coming now to *the Dwelling*: we find that number pervading the whole

ground-plan. This Dwelling (Heb. *Mishkan*) is 30 cubits long, 10 broad, and 10 high. Like the Court, it faces eastward. And approaching it from the east, a priest would find it opening into two chambers: first, the Holy (Place), 20 cubits long (by 10 by 10); and second, at the west end, screened from view by a curtain called the veil, the Most Holy (Place), Heb. "Holy of Holies," 10 cubits by 10 by 10,—an exact cube (the word *cube* is from the Greek, and has no relationship to the word *cubit*, which is from the Latin).



3. The quadrangular structure, which we have called the Dwelling, is shielded by a *Tent*, as shown in Mr. Gillies's diagram, No. 3. To one approaching the gate of the Court from the east, the Tent would show in the front elevation like a gable 15 cubits high into which the Dwelling is thrust back 5 cubits, where it is screened from



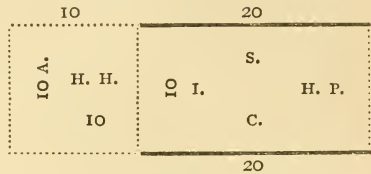
the Court by curtains supported by columns.

Now let us pause, to allow that outline to take possession of our mind. We will occupy the pausing time with recalling two great geographical Sanctuaries, each of which will help us to remember always those three things in the Mosaic Sanctuary—(1) The Court, (2) within the Court the Dwelling, and (3) within the Dwelling, the Holy of Holies. In Ex. xv. 17, Israel, saved through the Red Sea, sings about a Sanctuary established by Jehovah's hands, which at the same time seems to be a "mountain," into which He is bringing His people, as the place which He has made for Him to dwell in. Let us (see in Comm.) suppose this to be the mountain land of Palestine, which at its lowest is 1291 ft. above the level of the Dead Sea. There we see the three things. (1) The Court is Palestine itself, the holy land of Covenant provision to God's people; (2) the Dwelling is Jerusalem, the Holy City of the Living God; and (3) The holiest place in that city is the Temple of Jehovah. But let us suppose that the "mountain" of "Sanctuary" is Mount Sinai (Ex. iii. 1, 12, xxiv. 13; 1 Ki. xix. 8). Then again we find the three things. The Court is now found in the Sinaitic Peninsula (Introd. pp. 42-48); the mountain group or system of Sinai is the Dwelling; and the Most Holy Place is that particular peak on which Jehovah met only the mediator between God and man.

4. Now resuming our direct observation of the fabric, we disregard the Tent, and consider only that quadrangular structure called the Dwelling. Tabernacle is meant for a translation of the Hebrew word for Dwelling. Unhappily, in our Authorized Version, Tabernacle is often given as translation of *ohel*, which really means a different thing, namely, the *Tent* which conceals the dwelling it screens. Placing ourselves inside of the Dwelling, we see at the far west end of the Holy Place the *Altar of Incense*, in front of that veil which concealed the Most Holy. The High Priest, approaching it from the entrance of the Holy Place, saw at the farther end an



Altar of Incense (I.) and had on his right hand (the north) the *Table of Shewbread* or Presence Bread (S.), on which always were twelve loaves; and right opposite to it (south side) on his left hand, the seven-branched *Candlestick* or Lampstand. Every branch had a lamp on it: and all the seven looked across the Holy Place upon that Table with its loaves. The Candlestick was of pure gold.



5. Within the Holy of Holies there was nothing but, placed against the west end of it, the *Ark* and the *Mercy-seat* (Heb. *Kappōreth*; see note on it under xxv. 17). The Ark was an oblong quadrangular chest of wood overlaid with pure gold. It contained the Decalogue on the two Tables of stone; and later, there was there (see under ver. 16) also a pot of manna and Aaron's rod that blossomed. On the top of the Ark there was placed what our Version makes the *Mercy-seat*, though the Bible says nothing about a "seat." Some think it was the *lid* of the Ark, though the Bible nowhere says anything about a lid of the Ark. It was a slab of pure gold, to which the Bible gives the name of the *Kappōreth*. In the New Testament Greek (Ro. iii. 25), following the Septuagint Version, that is made *hilastērion* which our version renders "propitiation." If we should make this to be "propitiatory," or place or sphere of propitiation, then a distinct use would be left for our word "propitiation" as translation of *hilasmos* (1 Jn. ii. 3, iv. 10), which is nearly the same as *hilastērion*. The expression "throne of grace" occurs in the Greek of He. iv. 16. The idea of a throne is in keeping with what we know of the "meeting" there of God with His people in their High Priest, where He gave pardon and commandments. But the *Kappōreth* might rather represent the footstool of His throne, or (cp. xxiv. 10 and xxxiv. 5) the place of His feet.

6. The last of the details which we need at present to observe is the *cherubim*. The word is plur. of cherub; so that our *cherubims* is an awkward double plural,—as "oxens" or "mices." The whole interior of the Dwelling, on the roof and on all sides but the front, consisted of one great cloth, whose ground was fine white linen, but which, on its inner face, was adorned with "cherubic" figures. And on the *Kappōreth* there were two cherubim, of one piece with it, rising from its two extremities, and made of pure gold. The two creatures looked toward one another, down upon the *Kappōreth*. Each of them had two wings so stretched forward as to overshadow the *Kappōreth*. And it was there, "over the *Kappōreth*," "between the cherubim," that Jehovah, as the Theocratic King of Israel, was to be sought on their behalf by the High Priests. "Thou that dwellest between the cherubim" was a designation of Him as their Saviour King (so 2 Sa. vi. 2, at the bringing of the ark, and Ps. lxxx. 1). And His great promise here was (Ex. xxv. 22), "There will I meet thee; and I will commune with thee from above the *Kappōreth*, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment concerning the children of Israel." Here, evidently, we are at the heart of the whole Tabernacle meaning and purpose,—which is, the heart of the whole revelation of God as the Living God, the Redeemer.

Moses was very strictly charged (xxv. 9, etc.), in his erection of the fabric, to adhere to the direction of God. It would be well if men would do so in

their thoughts about the fabric. The circumstance that God has given us no information about the cherubim beyond what we have noted, has not prevented men from guessing, where guesswork seems at best out of place. There were cherubim at Eden's gate; there are cherubim in Ezekiel's ideal representations; there are some things which we may suppose to be cherubim, to be found in excavated remains of ancient empires, placed as if on guard at the entrance of imperial palaces. But happy thoughts occurring to our mind from a combination of such things may keep our mind away from the thing meant by the *Kappōreth* of *Exodus*, and by the cherubim arising out of *that*. And first, for our deliverance from bondage of imagination, let us fix it in our minds, that we really know nothing about the "figure" of those creatures in *Exodus* beyond the circumstance that their faces were toward the *Kappōreth*, and that their wings were stretched out on high so as to form a canopy above that.

They are only accessory; for otherwise, where there is so much of precise detail, THEIR "figure" would have been defined precisely. Any view that makes their figure to be of real significance, is by that very fact shown to be erroneous, involving failure to see the matter from the true central point of view. The true central point of view is given by the cherubim themselves, in looking down upon the *Kappōreth*. There (1 Pe. i. 10-12) they see that unto which "angels desire to look." The New Testament *Kappōreth*, "propitiation," is invariably connected with the atoning blood of Christ. So, the Old Testament propitiatory (*Kappōreth*) was sprinkled with atoning blood. And the front of the ark was sprinkled with that blood; as to which God had said in *Egypt* (xii. 13), "When I see the blood, I will pass over you."

Mr. Gillies, in his study of the material framework of the Tabernacle, finds that the formative conception of it all is spiritual—such as to be realized in atonement and incarnation (He. ii. 10). Israel, we saw (Intro. pp. 85-88), while they could bear to see more than one tent-home for the ark, appear to have thought that any ark but one is inconceivable, a spiritual absurdity. *Ichabod*—"the glory is departed," said the High Priest's daughter-in-law, out of her breaking heart, with her dying breath, because "the ark of God was taken." But the Hebrews did not speak vaguely about an ark of glory; they spoke and thought (He. ix.) about "the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy-seat." It was "between the cherubim" that the glory was. And the glory (xxxiv. 6, 7) was that of sovereign grace,—of free redeeming love of God, as the Covenant God and Saviour of a sinful but covenanted people. "Nature abhors a void." We must have something there, where God meets man in sovereign grace; we do not study the Bible but reject it in so far as *there*, in the peculiar presence of God, there is not atonement. And if there be the atonement, there will be no call for jejune insipidities about a lid of the ark, but the whole Tabernacle will worthily form itself outward from that centre in the peace of God.

The Tabernacle history has three parts:—1. of *direction*, chaps. xxv.—xxxi.; 2. of *episode*, xxxii.—xxxiv.; and 3. of *erection*, xxxv.—xl. It is important to see these in their connexion, especially with what goes before them all. In the immediately preceding history, the people are brought into *covenant* condition. And that gives the right point of view for looking at this Tabernacle history. The Tabernacle is a provision for their *continuance* in the covenant condition. This it is, by its being the *Dwelling* of Jehovah among men;

that in which He, on a way of *holiness*, meets His people as their Redeemer King. It thus is a means of perpetuating, through symbols, that "heaven on earth" which Israel's nobles once enjoyed (xxv. 10, 11), when they saw God without intervention of such a veil.

OF DIRECTION, chaps. xxv.—xxxi. The erection, xxxiv.—xl., is described in chronological order of the execution of the work, and thus to some extent, beginning with what *had* to be first made, proceeds from the outside toward the centre. This Direction, on the contrary, begins at the centre and thence proceeds outward. That is the logical order of nature or thought. In the nature of such things, what is first is the germinant conception out of which the thing grows, the formative idea of the whole which results in specifications of detail ("Before Abraham was, I am"). The idea, which is natively in the mind of God, was by Him shown to Moses in a "pattern:" the N. T. Greek for which, following the O. T. Septuagint (Act. vii. 44; He. viii. 5), is *type*. To that "pattern" or "type" Moses was very strongly warned (several times) to adhere in all parts of this fabric. The "figures" of the true, in He. ix. 24, are in the Greek original "anti-types;" which means, that the Tabernacle was in particulars a reflexion of that "type" or "pattern" which God had showed to Moses on the mount. The old fancy, of His having shown to Moses a *literal* "model" of the Tabernacle, on view on the mount, is unauthorized and childish. We do not know, nor need to know, in what *manner* God made Moses to perceive His plan. We do know that, in fact, somehow he did see that plan, as a whole and through details.

FURNITURE OF THE LORD'S HOUSE (xxv.). The direction begins with the Holiest, and proceeds thence to the Holy. At this stage of the Direction there is no mention made of the veil which was to screen the Holiest from view of the Holy; nor of the altar of incense (initial note on xxvi. 26—37) in front of that veil, whose horns were to be smeared with blood on the day of Atonement, and the incense of which was to accompany the High Priest into the presence of Jehovah. These two things, omitted at the beginning, belong to *the connexion* of the Holiest with the Holy; so that what is specified at the beginning is the furniture that belongs to the one place and to the other distinctly or separately, each by itself. It will be observed that our word "place" is not in the Hebrew proper name, which is simply *mikdash*, a "holy," and *kodesh kodashim*, a "holy of holies."

**Preparation** (xxv. 1—9). Here is the requisite *provision of materials* for the fabric and for the priestly vestments. On the costliness, the skill, and the presumable source of the wealth here implied, see Introd. pp. 88—90. Special notes will be made on details when we reach them in the Direction and Erection. But here from the outset mark, what continues to reappear farther on, the solemn prohibition (ver. 9) of all departure from the form prescribed by God. The suggestion of an adoption of Egyptian or other forms is not historical nor luminous:—(1) Resemblance in particulars may be simply coincidence arising out of natural fitness of the form; like the resemblance of precepts in xxi.—xxiii., to some things in heathen codes or systems, or, resemblance of official priestly garments to ordinary human dress. That would not preclude a supernatural prescription even of those details,—witness the positive revelation of moral law in the Decalogue. (2) The real meaning, *the thing* in every detail, is constituted by an idea which pervades the whole. That idea is known only to the Author of this religion (Jn. i. 18; Mat. xi. 27). And mere coincidence of details, which are not in vital possession of that idea, is like a coincidence in alphabetic letters on the part of words or sentences which have no meaning in common. (3) Adherence to the

CHAP. XXV. 1, 2. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall

prescribed form *because* it is prescribed, is itself a homage to God as King. It is a prerogative of royalty to prescribe the ceremonial of approaching the throne. "Will-worship" is an affront to the Majesty of heaven's Ruler.

NOTE: On the meaning of the whole, a view is given in the following extract. The reader may see a landmark in it when studying details; and its beautiful precision will be appreciated when that study is completed:—

"The Tabernacle was the Theocracy in miniature. It symbolized on a smaller scale, and therefore more intelligibly to men's eyes, those principles which the Theocracy symbolized. Now these principles, or some of them at least, were these:—(1.) The revealing and sanctifying presence of God in the midst of the Church. The theocracy was founded on this idea; this idea gave it its existence. Now this idea was founded most completely on the Holy of Holies and what it contained, viz. the law, which was God's testimony of Himself, and was made the covenant bond between Him and Israel, and so the very basis of the theocracy. And in the Holy of Holies God's manifested presence was seen, and from there He uttered His voice to the nation. (2.) The meeting of God and His people, and continuous and reciprocal intercourse between them. This was the second fundamental idea of the theocracy, being the natural consequence of the first. This idea was represented by the whole life of the nation, but particularly by the services and appointments of the Holy Place. There the priests, the purified people's representatives, ministered and offered to the Lord what no doubt by gift of God they were enabled to offer. They offered up incense, symbol of prayer and thanks, kindled by divine fire; they offered up the shewbread, symbol of holy deeds and works of faith; and they served the golden lamps, symbol of heavenly lights by divine oil. All this was but symbolical of the various forms the hidden spiritual life of the consecrated people took. The Holiest represented more what God gave; the Holy Place what the people gave, though what they gave was but made up of what they had received. (3.) In order to this intercourse, even in its lowest form, separation of the Church from the rest of the world. This was shown by the Court. (4.) The progressiveness through various stages of this intercourse with God and nearness to Him, once begun by separation from without. (5.) The foundation of all intercourse in atonement by blood; and that each new stage of progress must be won by atonement; and that all intercourse and service and life of men around God must, however true, and pure, and high, yet be atoned for as in many ways sinful. (6.) The necessity of holiness in those drawing near to God, Ps. xxiv. This was shown by the repeated separation of those who approached from the larger body who were kept back . . . by the multiplication of the ceremonies of purification, and the symbols of confession of sin, and the gradual elevation in character and sanctity and official place of those who approached in proportion to the closeness of their approach."—From article "Tabernacle" in Fairbairn's *Imperial Bible Dictionary*, by Professor A. B. Davidson.

1, 2. *Offering*: marg. *heave-offering* (under xxix. 23, 24), description of the spirit, of solemn and thankful cordiality, in which this gift was to be brought to God (see how the actual offering went in xxxv.). *That they bring*: a shade of improvement is in the R.V., *that they take*. *That giveth*—*heart*: Heb. here has the effect of, the heart driving to the action ("impelling"). The idea is, cordially; powerful and jubilant affection in the gift,—adoring love to God, *rushing* into this action joyfully. *My offering*: simply the offering that is to me,—a common Heb. idiom. But the whole sentence involves a claim of right on God's part: the gift is *due*



3 take my offering. And this *is* the offering which ye shall  
4 take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and  
5 purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, and rams'

to Him, and He claims it. He loves a cheerful giver; but He prescribes this thing He loves. Mere spontaneity, which is in the songs of birds and brooks, in the fragrant beauty of flowers, in the glory of sunshine, is not the highest creature offering. In the highest there is *obedience*; delighting in *the law* (Ro. vii. 22). *Free subjection*—running joyfully in the way of *commandments*, is the “money” (Lu. xv. 8-10). What follows of material wealth is but the “small change” of that gold. 3. The precious metals here specified existed in great abundance among those ancient peoples (silver not so much). *Gold*, always the most precious, is the most beautiful, and easily worked into beautiful forms, with a certain incorruptibility (symbolical). *Brass* here, really *bronze*: produced by amalgamation of copper and tin; and used where hardness and strength were in demand, until superseded by iron. The gold and silver offerings were not in coined money, but as raw material for the fabric and the furnishings. 4, 5. *Shittim*: plur. of *Shittah*, understood to be a species of acacia,—the *seyal*, found near the Red Sea. It was much valued for its qualities, especially strength and firmness along with lightness (cp. hickory for fishing-rods and coach-building). It is fine and firm in the grain, so as to take on a polish like mahogany, and, in such a climate, is virtually imperishable, like cedar. It is of yellowish colour, which darkens, reddening toward the heart. The use of the plur. form in this connexion may suggest the view that every plank of the tabernacle had to be made up out of several trees. That would harmonize with the general opinion—there are some exceptions—Canon Tristram—that *seyal* trees large enough individually to furnish a plank are not to be found. Though they should have been at one time, the barbarous waste of trees that has been going on in the Peninsula would account for dearth of that timber there now. *Fine linen*: not, as some have imagined, silk, but the beautiful soft white linen of Egypt (cp. Lu. xvi. 19; Re. xix. 8). The materials in ver. 4 were all spun into yarn by the women, but dyed before they were spun. The Egyptians were expert dyers, and their bright colouring still remains from that time to surprise us with its vividness. For the fabric there was needlework of embroidery as well as loom work. On “the Tabernacle colours” (under xxviii. 6-12), see Mr. Gillies' *Notes, Appendix*.

NOTE on the Tabernacle colours.—*White*—holiness—was the background of all, and the ground on which the coloured ornamentation was wrought. With reference to the remaining three there has been some difference among the learned. Distinct perception of colours, clear discrimination of one from another, appears to be a late attainment of mankind. Primitive peoples do not well distinguish colours, as children are not subtle discriminators of musical sound. The *glas* in Douglas (water), Isle of Man, means “green” in the Celtic of that island; in the Scottish Celtic the *glas* in Douglas means “gray.” But “the Tabernacle colours” can be reasonably determined by connexion with the Tabernacle thought. (1) The “royal colours”—blue, purple, and scarlet—are known wherever there are palaces; and for our purpose we may go to “kings' houses,” notwithstanding the Baptist. (2) In this case they may be identified separately. Thus, the *scarlet* has to be *blood-red*, in this religion of bleeding sacrifice (xiv.). *Blue* is that heaven which the “nobles” perceived even beneath Jehovah's feet (xiv. 10, 11). And as to *purple*, though the Heb. etymology here is uncertain, the thing is well known (“Tyrian” purple).



6 skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense, 7 onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the 8 breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may 9 dwell among them. According to all that I show thee, *after* the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make *it*.

5. *Goats' hair* has always been made into cloth for tents. *Ram skins* may have been tanned into leather and coloured. Red morocco was produced in North Africa long before Israel saw Egypt. The badger is out of place here. That animal is not found in Sinai; and, in fact, has no place in the Bible. The Heb. word here, *tachash*, has now been traced to the kindred Arabic word *tuchash*, which in that region is descriptive of a certain type of marine animals—such as the *seal*, the *dugong*, the *sea-cow*, if not also the *shark* and the *dog-fish*—which are found in that neighbourhood, and of which the skins might serve the purpose of that “covering” in the tent. The purpose was that of a waterproof, like oil-skin or tarpaulin. 6, 7. *Light*—of the candlestick; *anointing*—*e.g.* of the priests; *incense*—*e.g.* for the Altar of Incense. For details about these, and about the *breastplate* and the *ephod*, notes will appear in due place. But here observe how Moses, in all that wealth now pouring in upon him, is finding that “bread” which he “cast upon the waters” when he chose “the reproach of Christ” rather than “the treasures of Egypt” (cp. Mk. x. 29, 30).

NOTE on the words *Sanctuary* (*mikdash*), *Tabernacle* (*mishkan*), and *Tent* (*ohel*), which are given as names to this fabric. There are variations upon these names in the Scripture usage; but three as here given will suffice for illustration of the important threefold distinction which they represent. (1) *Sanctuary* is a general description of that residence of Jehovah as being Himself a holy God, and requiring that the people which meets Him there should be holy, in the sense of moral and spiritual character represented by the Ten Words on the Two Tables. It is a sphere or domain of holiness, intensifying in the Holy Place, and supreme in the Most Holy. *That idea of holiness was never associated with a heathen temple.* The (2) *Tabernacle*, constituted by that one great cloth, is appropriately **the dwelling** of Jehovah. The word “Tabernacle” is now so fully associated with that sacred thing, that it may be allowed to remain as a not very bad translation of *mishkan*, though it is a loss to us that the place has not been taken by the native English word **Dwelling**, which is the literal translation (under xxvii. 9). Our word church or “kirk,” German *kirche*, is from a Greek word meaning *Lord's* (house). *Ecclesia*, which is followed by the Romance and Celtic tongues of Christendom, is from a root referring to “calling and election.” (3) The *tent*, which our version most unfortunately often renders “tabernacle,” is quite distinct from the Tabernacle or Dwelling of which it is a “covering” or shelter; and the distinction is often full of significance in this second part of Exodus. It is attended to in the Revised Version, and an English reader might do well to mark it on the margin of his A.V.

9. *Pattern* (so ver. 40, etc.): see initial note here. The Heb. word is in 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, 12, 19, for the plans of the temple, and elsewhere (De. iv. 16, 17; Ezek. viii. 3, 10) for form, likeness, similitude. The prescription of conformity to God's plan is referred to in the initial note here.

- 10 And they shall make an ark of shittim wood: two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof, and a cubit and a half the height thereof.
- 11 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, within and without shalt thou overlay it, and shalt make upon it a crown of gold

But now mark its extent—it reaches to the *instruments, furnishings*, as well as the building. *The Tabernacle: the "Dwelling."* A priest within the Dwelling, in the absence of the "instruments," would see himself in a structure of white linen, with "cherubic" ornamentation in blue, purple, and scarlet, excepting on (east) front, which, in absence of the "tent" with its curtain—"door," would be open. The "Dwelling," three sides and roof, was all "one Tabernacle," xxvi. 6. The cloth of that "one Tabernacle," forming the roof on all the three sides, came down to within one cubit of the floor, which cubit showed the boards of the wooden frame, overlaid with gold, as a skirting or base plinth.

**Ark of the Testimony** (10-22). Later, "of the covenant" (under xl. 20). The "testimony" from which it had its Exodus name, was the Decalogue on the two stone tables (under ver. 21). That (under ver. 8) defines the *nature* of the "holiness" of this religion (Ps. xl. 8). We saw that the Dwelling or the tent was changeable (Introd. pp. 85-88); and was ultimately superseded by the Temple (though the "pattern" was adhered to in respect of "figure" or form). The ark had no successor. It was housed with great solemnity in David's Tabernacle (2 Sa. vi. 1, etc.), where (1 Chron. vi. 31) "the ark had rest." It was thence transferred to the Temple (2 Chron. vi. 41, where observe, "Thou and the ark of Thy strength"). It was regarded as in special equivalent to the effectual presence of God: the (changeable) Dwelling being its "rest" or home. It was not the Dwelling (1 Sa. iv.), but the ark, that was at the head of Israel's marching (e.g. Passage of the Jordan). It disappeared from the Temple, so as never more to be seen, when Jerusalem was taken at the beginning of the Babylonish captivity.

**NOTE on "the ark" and "the mercy-seat."**—This "ark," *arōn*, has no relationship to the floating "ark," *tēbha*, of Noah and of Moses in the Nile. It was simply an oblong quadrangular chest, for containing treasures (*keimēlia*). There is, as we shall see when we come to the *Kappōreth* ("mercy-seat"), a theological as well as a scholarly interest in carefully distinguishing it from what some have called its "lid"—the *Kappōreth* slab of pure solid gold, with cherubim rising from it, which was "placed upon" the ark. Let the reader closely observe all through the history, whether that is anywhere spoken of as a "lid," or whether anywhere there is one allusion to a "lid" of the ark. (NOTE on the *Kappōreth* under ver. 17.)

10. The dimensions have no distinct significance; but the distinct specification of them has, as a fact, the significance of showing that everything had to be done according to divine prescription. Moses here is only a servant (He. iii. 6): "the master of the House" is God (He. iii. 4). 11. *Overlay* might mean *gilding*, at which the Egyptians were expert; but the Jewish tradition made it to be *plating*. *Pure* gold, abstractly most precious, could be employed where strength was not in demand: it had the advantage of beauty, preciousness, and (symbolically) perfect incorruptness of purity. *Crown*: here, as in ver. 24, *rim* was a rim or moulding round the edge. On the shewbread table, a raised rim could serve the useful purpose of preventing articles from slipping off. But on the *band* in ver. 25, it could

12 round about. And thou shalt cast four rings of gold for it, and put *them* in the four corners thereof; and two rings *shall be* in the one side of it, and two rings in the other side of it.  
 13 And thou shalt make staves of shittim wood, and overlay  
 14 them with gold. And thou shalt put the staves into the rings by the sides of the ark, that the ark may be borne with them.  
 15 The staves shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be  
 16 taken from it. And thou shalt put into the ark the testimony  
 17 which I shall give thee. And thou shalt make a mercy-seat of pure gold: two cubits and a half *shall be* the length thereof,

be only for seemly ornamental finishing by Bezaleel. 12. *Rings*: not said to be of *pure* gold. In hurried marching or on broken ground, the weight of the ark and its contents might make a severe strain upon the rings: they thus had need of a strengthening alloy. *Four corners*: ought to be rather, four feet. These would be something like the "paws" which may be seen as base of a heavy piece of furniture, keeping it off the ground. In Egyptian representations a sacred ark may be seen carried shoulder high, for display to the people, in processions. Israel's ark was carefully kept from view even of the priests (*invisible* real presence). 13-15. *Shall not—from it*: to prevent all human contact with the ark. The kind of *sacredness* thus claimed for it was on occasion terribly asserted (1 Sa. v., vi. 19; 2 Sa. vi. 2-11). 16. *The testimony* here (xxx. 18) is the Decalogue on its tables (witnessing to God's holy hatred of sin). Whether the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that blossomed, were placed literally within the *arōn* is considered under xl. 20. 17. *Mercy-seat*: on this we make a—

NOTE on the *Kapporeth* ("mercy-seat"). It was a solid slab of pure gold, whose value Dr. Rawlinson estimates at £25,000 (*Comm. on Exodus*); and the two cherubim, which arose from it, and overshadowed it with their wings, were of the same material. It has been suggested, to the effect of belittling propitiation and atonement in the Most Holy Place, that this was natively simply the "lid" of the ark, applied to the purpose of a "seat" by a sort of logical after-thought (as a sailor utilises his chest for a seat). This, though perpetrated by "scholars," has nothing to do with real scholarship. A scholar adheres to his book. And excepting in their imagination there is no trace of any significance attached to the "lid" of this ark, nor allusion to its having had a lid. In the statements as to the making, and correspondingly in the statements as to the handling, the *arōn* and the *Kappōreth* uniformly appear as two distinct things:—the ark, as a thing that has been prepared for the *Kappōreth*, and the *Kappōreth*, as being placed *upon* the ark, put into possession of its prepared base. (Thus, xxvi. 34, xxix. 33, xxx. 6, xl. 20.) To a "lid," or even to a "seat," there is no allusion in Scripture (though in the N. T. there is mention made of a "throne of grace," He. iv. 16). The Heb. *proper name* of this thing, the "*Kappōreth*," is remotely connected with a verb *Kaphar*, which occurs only in Gen. vi. 14, where it means "to pitch or tar." It is immediately formed from *kipper*, a verb which occurs more than seventy times in the O. T., and *always with the sole meaning* of "to pardon," or "to cover sin." So in 1 Chron. xxviii. "the place of the mercy-seat" is in Heb. "house of the *Kappōreth*," which can have no meaning except place of atonement. In the N. T., following the Sept. Version, the Greek for this *Kappōreth* is *hilasterion*, which means *propitiation* (Ro. iii. 25): either in the concrete, propitiatory seat or place; or abstractly (1 Jn. ii. 3, iv. 10), the effect of propitiation of God through expiation of sin.

18 and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof. And thou shalt  
 make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make  
 19 them, in the two ends of the mercy-seat. And make one  
 cherub on the one end, and the other cherub on the other  
 end; *even* of the mercy-seat shall ye make the cherubims on  
 20 the two ends thereof. And the cherubims shall stretch forth  
*their* wings on high, covering the mercy-seat with their wings,  
 and their faces *shall look* one to another; toward the mercy-  
 21 seat shall the faces of the cherubims be. And thou shalt put  
 the mercy-seat above upon the ark; and in the ark thou shalt  
 22 put the testimony that I shall give thee. And there I will  
 meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above  
 the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims which *are*

The expiation of sin, as the way (He. x. 19-22) of propitiation of God, is most powerfully exhibited in the symbolism of the atonement sacrifices (*Kippurim*, Ex. xxx. 10), and illustrated by the manifestation of divine redeeming love (Ex. xxxiv. 4-7) "over the Kappōreth," "between the cherubim." And it is "fulfilled" in Christ, as seen by Moses and Elias (Lu. ix. 31, cp. 1 Pe. 10-12) and other Christians (2 Co. iii. 18), as well as by the angels, which "desire to look into these things" (cp. Re. xxii. 1-3). The vulgar insipidity of turning the Kappōreth into the lid of a chest has no ground in this noble simple history, nor warrant in the glorious scriptural representations of the way of life in God, nor shadow of real justification in "scholarship." Historically, its distinctive inspiration has been antipathy to the gospel (2 Co. iv. 4). (See note on *the whole Tabernacle fabric*, p. 82, etc.)

17. *Two cubits—thereof.* This coincides with the dimensions of the upper surface of the ark, which upon any view it was made to fit. 18. As to the length of the cubit, see note on *the whole Tabernacle* (p. 82, etc.). On *beaten gold*, see under ver. 31. *Cherubim*: (plur. of cherub). Similar figures on Egyptian monuments have only one wing so outstretched, the other covering the side of the figure downward. The Mosaic arrangement screened *the face* that looked down toward the Kappōreth (cp. Is. vi. 2). The wings of both cherubim, *stretched forth on high*, and so *covering* the Kappōreth, were a *canopy*, as of heaven above. The Kappōreth, correspondingly, would be as that sapphire (xxiv. 10), like the very heaven, where the "nobles" beheld the feet of the King. Here the Kappōreth appears, not as a "seat," but as footstool or standing-ground; where the King may be as He was seen by Stephen (Act. vii. 55), and by John (Re. i. 10). 21. As to *place* of the Kappōreth, see special note under ver. 17; and as to *place* of the Decalogue, under ver. 16. 22. **MEET**: very important, as representing the soul of the whole system. We therefore make it the subject of special—

**NOTE on the Tabernacle "meeting"** (see under xxix. 3, note, 42, xxx. 7-11, etc.).—Our version has materially injured the history in Exodus by systematically rendering as "tabernacle of the congregation" what ought to be made **Tent of Meeting**. The Hebrew word *mō'ed*, appropriated for the proper name of Jehovah's Dwelling, means *meeting*. The specific purpose of God's dwelling among men was, that He might "meet with them." And now, in the innermost shrine of that Dwelling, He shows precisely **the spot** of meeting, where He "will,



upon the ark of the testimony, of all *things* which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel.

- 23 Thou shalt also make a table of shittim wood: two cubits  
 shall be the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof,  
 24 and a cubit and a half the height thereof. And thou shalt  
 overlay it with pure gold, and make thereto a crown of gold  
 25 round about. And thou shalt make unto it a border of an  
 hand-breadth round about, and thou shalt make a golden  
 26 crown to the border thereof round about. And thou shalt

commune with" Israel through the mediator, namely, "from above the Kappōreth, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which He will give [Moses] in commandment unto Israel." Meeting God for communion with Him, and in particular receiving His commandments, was the "heaven on earth" which He gave to the "nobles" (xxiv. 9-11, cp. vers. 4, 7). It is what Christ gives on earth through His ordinances (Mat. xxviii. 18-20); and in the holy city, new Jerusalem, where the dewdrops are crowned by the sunrise (Re. xxii. 5).

**Table of Shewbread (23-30).** We now have passed out of the Most Holy into the Holy. This table is on the north side (right hand as one looks in from the tent curtain-door). Right opposite it there is to be immediately mentioned the Candlestick, as if looking upon it with seven eyes. The Altar of Incense, which is to be placed in front of the veil that shall screen the Most Holy, is not specified until farther on in this detail of direction. That, however (under xxvi. 20, 35), does not imply that the Shewbread is the most honourable: the ark, *e.g.*, is prescribed for (ver. 1, etc.) before greater things,—namely, the Tables of Testimony, which gives the ark its name of significance, and the Kappōreth, to which the ark subserves as a base. But in the Holy Place the Shewbread is **the distinctive thing**; it is the thing **on** which the light shines (ver. 37), **from** which (Re. v. 8) the adoration of incense passes into the Most Holy, and **to** which the priestly blessing comes from between the Cherubim over the Kappōreth. The *table* itself is simply a table. It is significant only as being the table of **that bread**. The Heb. name is lit. "face-bread," or "bread-of-presence." (In Mat. xii. 4 it is lit. "the presentation bread.") The distinction is not in the bread, but in its being **there presented** before God, in His Holy Place, according to His commandment. It represents **the life of Israel consecrated** to Jehovah (Act. xxvi. 7). In these loaves we see the twelve tribes "instantly serving God day and night." Their consecrated life is sacrificial, priestly (Ex. xix. 6, cp. 1 Pe. ii. 5). It is *the thing* in that Holy Place on which those eyes are shining (He. iv. 12), with a light of holy oil drawn from the whole system of the universe (see the *spices* coming from afar in Mat. ii. and He. ii. 10).

23-28. Of *dimensions* here, as under ver. 10. Of *gold, crown, rings, endstones*, see under vers. 11, 12, 13. The *border* in ver. 25 has likewise a *crown*, which in this case can be only an **ornamental finishing**. On the Arch of Titus at Rome (figures in *Speaker's Commentary* and in *Bible Dictionaries*), representing his triumph over the taking of Jerusalem, there were some figures representing Temple furnishings. Among others—the Shewbread Table (but *what* shewbread table?). And this shows a *band or frame* ("round about," ver. 25), about half-way down the legs, connecting them together, and binding the whole Table into firm compactness. The "places of the staves," "over against the border" (ver. 27), are the four "corner" places (ver. 26), where that band or frame met the legs. This would be a



make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings in the four  
 27 corners that *are* on the four feet thereof. Over against the  
 border shall the rings be for places of the staves, to bear the  
 28 table. And thou shalt make the staves *of* shittim wood, and  
 overlay them with gold, that the table may be borne with  
 29 them. And thou shalt make the dishes thereof, and spoons  
 thereof, and covers thereof, and bowls thereof, to cover  
 30 withal: *of* pure gold shalt thou make them. And thou shalt  
 set upon the table shewbread before me alway.

31 And thou shalt make a candlestick *of* pure gold: *of* beaten  
 work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his

suitable place for fixing the rings: men could conveniently by means of the staves carry the table half-shoulder high. At ver. 28 there is no such prohibition as at ver. 15: the Table had not the unapproachable sacredness: it meant only, *man's* life. 29. From etymology and other side-lights, the *dishes* are understood to have been, deep bowls for containing the "loaves." (In Nu. vii. 13, etc., the word is made, not "dishes," but "chargers.") For *spoons* here the Sept. has a Greek word meaning "incense cups;" and two such things are shown on Titus' Arch (Rawlinson: *Comm. on Ex.*). In Lev. xxiv. 7, we see that, in fact, incense was placed on the shewbread table, to be "on the bread for a memorial." *Covers* and *bowls* are in the Sept. made, *flagons* and *chalices*; correspondingly to which, *to cover withal*, would give place to, *to pour out withal* (so in marg.). The words and things are of a sort so little in common use, that knowledge of the exact original of them is now precarious and doubtful. But we see as a fact the great care that was taken to have everything done precisely according to prescription. Beyond that, the interest is only antiquarian. Canon Cook, whose judgment in this branch of sacred learning is esteemed most highly, is of opinion that (cp. under xxix. 33, 34) the Bible notices of the Shewbread Table furniture have in them a trace of there having been a true "drink-offering" in the Service of it. 30. The shewbread loaves had to be changed once a week on the Sabbath (Lev. xxiv. 5-9); and (cp. Mat. xii. 1, etc.) the bread could not be lawfully eaten except by priests. The *alway* here corresponds to Paul's "instantly, day and night" (Act. xxvi. 7). Israel's consecration of life was to be ceaseless, perpetual.

**The Candlestick** (31-40). This completes the (present) Direction as to the Holy Place; and at the close of it there is repeated the prohibition, which was delivered (ver. 9) at the close of the Direction as to the Most Holy. The Light, on the south side, which (under xxvi. 18, 20) was the more honourable, was (ver. 37) placed so as to look straight across the room at the twelve loaves on that Table. This would be all the more impressive if the seven lamps were as they are shown on Titus' Arch, all on one level, as if seven men were in line, looking across the room upon a priest. From the way in which here the branches are described as in pairs springing from the stem, one in each pair at the opposite side of the stem from another, it may be inferred that the lamps were at least all in one plane; that is to say, like the branches of a wall-tree, not like the branches of a forest tree. Titus' Arch was only the representation which a Roman artist chose to make of the Candlestick, which was not even one of those made for Solomon's temple; so that it leaves us far out of sight of the one made by Bezaleel himself (xxxvii. 1, 17) in the wilderness. In the elaboration

branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of  
 32 the same. And six branches shall come out of the sides of  
 it; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and  
 33 three branches of the candlestick out of the other side: three  
 bowls made like unto almonds, *with* a knop and a flower in  
 one branch; and three bowls made like almonds in the other  
 branch, *with* a knop and a flower: so in the six branches that  
 34 come out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick *shall*  
*be* four bowls made like unto almonds, *with* their knops and  
 35 their flowers. And *there shall be* a knop under two branches  
 of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and  
 a knop under two branches of the same, according to the

of details there was room for the consecration of art in his person (xxxvi. 1, etc.); but the exact specification, in multiplication of the triplet, *bowl*, *knop*, and *flower*, shows that the "figure" as a whole must have been thoroughly to order of the Divine Architect.

**NOTE on bowl, knop, and flower.**—The definiteness of the prescription as to this ornamental triplet, when compared with the generality of the *crow*n prescription for the ark and the Shewbread Table, occasions at least curiosity. There appear to have been four triplets for the stem or shaft, and additionally three for every branch:—in all, 22. But what this ornament really was, cannot be made out with conclusive clearness. The *flower*, when mentioned, always comes last, and it ceases to be mentioned before the close of the Direction as to this matter. The *knop* alone continues to be spoken of to the end. It seems to have been of a bulbous form, in the bosom of a calix or "cup," which is the *bowl* of our version. This is a natural ornament in carving—*e.g.* representing the acorn in its "bowl," which is a very pretty thing to a child on the forest border. What the "flower"—somehow associated with a *lily* form—was, does not appear. It may have been some sort of delicate sprig or leaf, such as could be shown in fine gold of a sacred shrine, but might not be fitted for wind and weather in the coarse sculpture of an open-air arch. The light of revelation, in a perfection represented by the sacred number seven (on which see under xxiii. 10-13), found in the seven-branched candlestick (Re. iv. 5) a starting-point of symbolism, which it may previously have made. Then, if a man receive illumination from heaven, he, being rational and not dumb unless deaf, becomes an illuminator on earth (2 Co. iv. 6; 1 Co. xi. 23). And the Community of those enlightened by that Spirit, whose life in them is a sacred oil, are (1 Ti. iii. 15) "the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." But historically Bezaleel simply makes the Candlestick.

31. Observe that the Candlestick, like the Kappōreth (under 10), is of *pure* gold. *Beaten work*; see under xxxii. 4, cp. Jud. xviii. 31, would be *cast* as a flat plate (under xxxii. 4), to be rounded and otherwise finished with hammer and graving tools. The cherubim, of beaten work, were presumably hollow: the candlestick *had* to be so; its branches being pipes for oil. *Of the same*; that is, of the said "candlestick." *Shaft*, in this verse, is the central stem, of which a prolongation constitutes the middle "branch" (witness a larch fir-tree) between the two "threes." 32. *Candlestick* has in this verse come to be that middle stem from which the branches are seen spreading three on each side. 33. For every branch, three triplets. 34. Four triplets for the central stem. 35. Every stem triplet shall be under the point from which a pair of branches spring, one on each side (the last of the four will be the base of the lamp on the solitary

36 six branches that proceed out of the candlestick. Their  
 knops and their branches shall be of the same ; all of it *shall*  
 37 *be* one beaten work of pure gold. And thou shalt make the  
 seven lamps thereof ; and they shall light the lamps thereof,  
 38 that they may give light over against it. And the tongs  
 thereof, and the snuff-dishes thereof, *shall be of* pure gold.  
 39 Of a talent of pure gold shall he make it, with all these  
 40 vessels. And look that thou make *them* after their pattern,  
 which was showed thee in the mount.

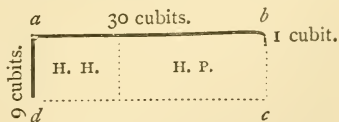
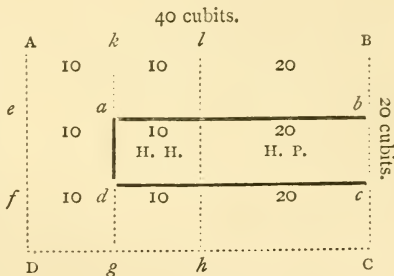
middle branch). 36. *Of the same*: that is, of the stem—"candlestick" in 36 :—the ornaments are not to be stuccoed on ; but the stem itself is to be ornamented in that form. 37 (see under xxvi. 35). It is an open question (xxx. 8) whether the lamps were kept burning in the daylight. Ideally there was no earthly sunlight in that Holy Place (Re. xxii. 5) : witness the Tent door-curtains. Aaron's trimming the lamps in the evening did not imply that they had not burned through the day : lamps have to be trimmed at some time, as the foolish virgins will know by and by. *Over against it* : opposite the shewbread table—which at this stage is the only thing existing in that Place. *Tongs* : for handling the wick. *Snuff-dishes* : for holding the trimmings. See on our modern innovation under. *Pure gold* :—see how many times this is said here of the candlestick ; and *Exercise*,—the *Talent* being 93½ lbs. weight avoirdupois, find the value of the Candlestick gold at £3, 15s. per oz.

XXVI. STRUCTURE OF THE LORD'S HOUSE.—We employ this general expression in order to be able to retain for distinct specific use the word *Dwelling* for the Heb. *mishkan* (see note on the words *Sanctuary*, etc., p. 89). After the House was fairly erected, men might somewhat loosely employ *mishkan* as including precincts—everything connected with that Dwelling, of which there is some appearance of beginning in the Exodus history (under xxvi. 9). But in the actual structure the things are very distinct ; and the distinctness of them is ordinarily kept clear by the historian in his discriminating use of the words *mishkan* (dwelling) and *ohel* (tent), which our Version sadly confuses.

NOTE on the elevation of the structure.—We saw (note on *whole Tabernacle*, p. 82, etc.) that the ground-plan ran into quadrangles. Ezekiel's vision, too, has quadrangular measurements ; and John's new Jerusalem, the holy city, is four-square. In the solid measurements of the elevation, likewise, everything about the dwelling itself is rectangular. The tent we will suppose to have been a triangle ; but it is found that a right angle at the roof, a natural and common form for a tent, so as to be all but normal, is what will meet the test of requirements prescribed by other conditions of the structure. We saw that the essential dwelling (xxvi. 1, 6) is constituted by one great cloth, such as Peter saw in his vision (Act. x.). It embraces, as a dwelling, all within, forming roof and three sides. In Exodus the "tent" and the wooden frame are quite clearly distinct from that cloth dwelling of curtain-walls. But our Version has "a covering upon the Tabernacle," instead of "a tent" that was "over it ;" as if this additional fabric had been of the substance Dwelling, as the skin is of the substance the body ;

while it really is distinct from it as an umbrella is from a man it shields—or as a shell is from a hermit crab. Again, the wooden fabric of boards for the Tabernacle (ver. 15) is not the Dwelling, with that cloth as a tapestry or lining. It is a frame for a cloth dwelling, from which it is distinct, as the frame of a balloon is distinct from the balloon—or a shell from shell-fish. The goats' hair tent (ver. 14) has an outer "covering" (in the Heb. a distinct word) of rams' skins; as a wooden roof may have an outer covering of slate or thatch. And again, another "covering" (same Heb. as the rams' skins in ver. 14) is made of what our Version makes *badger skins*—(R.V. *seal skins*). This seal-skin work is placed here in the Direction presumably as belonging to that sort of work. But what it really is meant to cover and protect is not the tent, whose red colouring (cp. "the redemption," Eph. i. 7) it would conceal. It is for the Tabernacle,—to serve that one-cloth dwelling by protecting its wooden frame; as a man is served by a waterproof overcoat that protects his coat. If we will utilize the homely illustration thus suggested, then in that man (2 Co. v. 1; 2 Pe. i. 13, 14), (1) wearing a garment all of one piece, which (2) is protected by a waterproof overcoat,—while (3) an umbrella shields the whole, we see the Tabernacle fabric as including, (1) the linen "*dwelling*" (all of one piece), (2) the wooden *frame* (with seal-skin "covering"), and (3) the goats' hair "*tent*" (with ram-skin "covering").

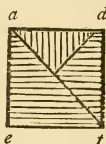
1st, **The Dwelling** (1-6). "The tabernacle shall be one," R.V. of ver. 6. At vers. 1 and 6, the beginning and the end of the Direction concerning this one-cloth structure, it is made emphatically to be *the Dwelling* (shown by the Hebrew definite article before *mishkan*, "dwelling" or *tabernacle*; see under xxv. 8). The construction can be shown in an *Exercise on Model*, according to the accompanying figure, A B C D, of one piece of paper, whose length is to its breadth as 40 to 30, or as 4 to 3. In *a d c b*, 30 by 10, we have the roof of the Dwelling; the Holy Place at the east end, 20, and the Most Holy at the west end, 10. For the north and south cloth walls of the Dwelling, we have respectively *b B k a* and *c C g d*. The actual breadth of the great cloth, to reach across as roof and down as two side-walls, is, not 30 cubits, but 28. That leaves a cubit of space next the ground that is not reached by the cloth side-walls, which are only each 9 cubits in height, and that space is occupied as "wainscoting," by so much of the lower extremity of the wooden board-frame overlaid with gold. So far as to the breadth of the great cloth. Of the 40 cubits' length, 30 are required for the roof and side-walls, as we have seen. The remaining 10 would (see under xxvi. 31-33), being allowed to fall perpendicularly, furnish a west end wall, 9 cubits to the Holy of Holies, and a hanging of 1 cubit at the east end, which had not this wall made by the one great cloth, but a distinct provision of curtain serving as a door or gate (the "first veil" referred to in He. ix. 3). The corner squares *A e a k* and *D g d f*, will, if *d g c c* and *a b B k* be brought downward into perpendicular of parallel



The 40 cubits' length.

CHAP. XXVI. I. Moreover, thou shalt make the tabernacle *with* ten curtains *of* fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: *with* cherubims of cunning work shalt thou make  
 2 them. The length of one curtain *shall be* eight and twenty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and every  
 3 one of the curtains shall have one measure. The five curtains shall be coupled together one to another; and *other* five

walls from the roof *a b c d*, fold behind the west end, as shown in the figure. Mr. Gillies says that they were otherwise disposed of. We do not say, No. The *back* of the cloth would be concealed, all along the three sides of Dwelling, by the envelope of wooden frame. The *face* of the cloth wall appearing inside of the Dwelling, would show only, on the white linen ground the "cherubic" ornamentation, which was inwrought into all the "breadths" ("curtains"): there would thus be the same aspect everywhere, of roof and three sides, until there came to be the veil between the Holiest and the Holy.



NOTE on the *minute antiquities*.—It is said that human literature has no parallel, in a national history, to the full detailed exactness of the Exodus description of the Tabernacle. But—we saw—as this and that particular thing may fall out of human use and knowledge, it is sometimes difficult or impossible to understand the description of it. Thus in Homer the harnessing of a mule is very difficult for modern scholars; and the dressing of a lady—Juno—arming for conquest, is perhaps impossible. But some things can be understood by rightly trying. The above exercise can be done by a child, not using knife or scissors, with its fingers. If some high-sounding "scholars" had practised it in infancy, students of Scripture would have been spared a good deal of confused writing about the Tabernacle.

1. Observe in vers. 1 and 6, the *mishkan* is (under xxv. 8) decisively made of the one great cloth (R.V. "the tabernacle shall be one"). *Curtains* are the "breadths" into which the cloth was woven. Five were permanently united into a half-tabernacle, and five into another; to join the two together into the one great cloth was the use of the loops and taches along the two edges where they were joined. This division of the cloth into two would be convenient for handling and packing it. *Twined linen* was linen of which every thread consisted of several strands twisted into one by spinning, like stocking yarn: everything about the dwelling, from the *pure* gold downward, was to be the best of its kind. So the cherubic ornamentation, which for the (outside) curtains of tent-door and court-gate were to be only done with the needle (embroidery), was for the dwelling to be inwrought into the cloth at the loom. Hence this was to be *of cunning work*, lit. *work of the skilful* ("expert" weaver) (Paisley shawls on the Jacquard loom were thus the work of a distinct craft from common weavers). 2. *Every measure*: of the 10 "breadths," every one shall be 28 cubits long (and 4 broad). 3. *The five curtains*: there were thus to be made up the two half-tabernacles, in whose union "*the Tabernacle shall be one*" (R.V.). 4-6. See the above note on *minute antiquities*. It is admitted that our version fairly gives the substance of the sense, such as it *has* to be. But the words here are confusing, unless we mentally see *the thing*: which, in the opinion of an architect (Fergusson) who has greatly studied the subject, *must* have been before the bodily eyes of the writer of the Exodus description.



- 4 curtains *shall be* coupled one to another. And thou shalt make loops of blue upon the edge of the one curtain from the selvedge in the coupling; and likewise shalt thou make in the uttermost edge of *another* curtain, in the coupling of
- 5 the second. Fifty loops shalt thou make in the one curtain, and fifty loops shalt thou make in the edge of the curtain that *is* in the coupling of the second; that the loops may take
- 6 hold one of another. And thou shalt make fifty taches of gold, and couple the curtains together with the taches; and it shall be one tabernacle.

NOTE on the "coupling."—Whenever, say, after a day's march, the Dwelling had to be "reared up," the two half-tabernacles were made into "one" by means of loops and taches. Along the edge of each half, where the junction ("coupling") was to be made, there were *fifty* loops; and there were fifty *taches* for holding these fifty pairs of loops together. *Tache* means *clasp*. The clasp in this case would be some sort of double hook, like the letter S, lay hold of a loop at each end of it, and so attaching the one half-tabernacle together at the selvedge. Fifty clasps uniting fifty pairs of loops would make a point of junction at every  $\frac{2}{3}$  cubit's distance across the whole tabernacle, from base to base of the two walls and along the roof.

The Heb. word for *loops* here occurs only in connexion with this one thing, here and at xxxvi. 11, 12. The *wool* here shows that the tabernacle, "blue, purple, and scarlet," were not simply colours, but coloured yarn. Canon Cook notes (*Speak. Comm.*) that the Heb. for *tache* here "is used only in reference to the taches of the tabernacle-cloth and of the tent-cloth of the sanctuary," while the word for *hook* (different) is used "only in reference to the hooks of the veil and of the tent curtain" (proof of historical reality).

2nd, **The tent over the Dwelling** (7-14). (See note on the elevation, p. 96). The Heb. *ohel* is the appropriate word for "tent" in the ordinary sense of that term. It is a distinct word from that for (ordinary) "covering" (*mikseh*) in ver. 14, which again is distinct from the peculiar "covering" (sin-pardoning) meant by *Kappôreth*. A "tent" (as figured by Mr. Gillies, APPENDIX, and by Canon Cook, *Speak. Comm.*), though really distinct from the Dwelling, would from the outside appear as if it had been the Dwelling: like the roof of a "frame" house with eaves extending down so as to make a verandah. So to the Israelite the conspicuous thing from the outside would be the red-coloured ram-skin outer covering of the sloping roof of the tent: the skin being inside, in contact with the goats' hair cloth of the tent; while outside, in view of men, was the coloured fleece. An Israelite would not regard that as the dwelling it shielded. As to the "seal-skin" covering over the goats' hair tent, it would be of no use; and would conceal the coloured ram-skin covering, manifestly made to be seen. But Mr. Gillies places us in light here. The skin of any such type of marine animal, as a plaster on the face of the wall, and an oil-skin reaching across the linen roof, would serve an important purpose of protection even to the wooden frame, and still more to the delicate roof of the Dwelling, which otherwise had nothing between it and the hollow space below the tent. Mr. Gillies' suggestion that the colour of the seal-skin tent might be bluish, has (like the Bible) a Calvinistic Presbyterian look; but it also has a basis in natural history of the *phoca*; and a string of blue to hold on by, ver. 4, not to

7 And thou shalt make curtains of goats' hair to be a covering upon the tabernacle: eleven curtains shalt thou make.  
 8 The length of one curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits: and the eleven curtains  
 9 shall be all of one measure. And thou shalt couple five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by themselves, and shalt double the sixth curtain in the forefront of the tabernacle.  
 10 And thou shalt make fifty loops on the edge of the one curtain that is outmost in the coupling, and fifty loops in

mention a lace of blue on the breastplate of the high priest, and a precedence given to blue in the naming of the colours. Moreover, the Sept. Version here has blue expressly—"blue skins" (Gr. *hyacinthine*).

7, 8. *Eleven curtains*: with the same single breadth as in vers. 1, 2, this gives us 44 cubits here in place of the 40 there; and here 30 cubits are expressly given instead of the 28 there (see under ver. 13). 9-11. Here one of the halves is to contain six breadths. Of these the sixth is to be disposed of by being "doubled in forefront of the Tabernacle" (mistranslation for "tent," see initial note here). This "doubling" has much perplexed men. Mr. Gillies finds extrication in simply accepting the Bible fact of "doubling" in the sense of *making into two* (half-breadths). Whereupon the verse is found to be not only consistent with his general view of the Tabernacle structure, but demanded by it (incidental evidence of "undesigned coincidence," which makes a very good species of proof of the view). Namely, as follows:—If at ver. 9 we make two half-curtains, and expand one of them as directed "on the forefront," then we shall be able to provide that half-curtain which is so imperiously called for at ver. 12, "the remnant that remaineth," "the half-curtain," "to hang over the back-side of the Tabernacle." (In ver. 13, "a cubit" ought to be "the cubit.") The 40 cubits (44 minus 4) remaining of the goats' hair cloth will give (beyond 30 cubits' length of dwelling it screens) 5 cubits for a verandah covering both at the back and at the front (while 5 cubits of covered verandah is what, as we shall see, will result to each of the two sides, north and south, from 30 cubits of a tent breadth disposed in the customary form of a tent, rectangular at ridge, with a height of 15 cubits).

**NOTE on the number five.** (See note on *thumb* under xxix. 20; and on dividing the Ten Words into 5's in initial note to xx.) Here it again comes to the front remarkably. Here is the most remarkable of what we will call its "apparations." Mr. Gillies observes that on both sides of the tent there is a space that has not yet been utilised: the tent ropes will carry us 10 cubits beyond the verandah toward the court enclosure or fence. But that leaves us with 10 cubits beyond the tent-pegs, between them and that fence. Now, the tent pillars require, all along the sides, 5 cubits for *their* stays like tent ropes. Thus, along the side, between the verandah and the court-fence, there is left for perambulation a clear space of 5 cubits. And, lo! it now breaks in upon us, that the whole 50 cubits of form are thus (see Mr. Gillies' figure, No. 3) parcelled out completely into spaces of 5 cubits each. We remember also that the superficial measurements of the elevation, including the great cloth, all ran into "multiples" of 5. And this last discovery now awakens us to the fact that the inevitable number 5 is all-pervasive, in command of everything above us and around us; as in the torrid zone the voyager, at eve, is suddenly aware that the

- 11 the edge of the curtain which coupleth the second. And thou shalt make fifty taches of brass, and put the taches into the loops, and couple the tent together, that it may be one.
- 12 And the remnant that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remaineth, shall hang over the back side
- 13 of the tabernacle. And a cubit on the one side, and a cubit on the other side, of that which remaineth in the length of the curtains of the tent, it shall hang over the sides of the taber-
- 14 nacle on this side, and on that side, to cover it. And thou shalt make a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering above of badgers' skins.

universe is full of stars. (The *thumb* is specially consecrated, see under xxix. 20.) That is, the symbol of man's rational activity on earth,—*he* is the only "hand" employed by the Architect of the universe. And the hand has *five* fingers. As to the Architect Himself (He. iii. 4), His *style* is shown by the fact that "*five* is the model number of the highest class of plants," M'Cosh and Dickie, *Typical Forms in Nature*. Query,—Is there any thumb which makes a true hand in the universe but man's?)

11. The *brass* here is *bronze* (under xxv. 3), the cloth is coarse goats' hair, and the cherubic ornamentation of the gate-curtain is not woven at the loom, but put in with the needle ("tambouring"). That is to say, here we are outside, in the common air, not within Jehovah's dwelling; so that here everything is, though good of its own kind, yet not the superlative kind of thing that alone is to be seen there. 12. Here is that loud and urgent call, which we were never able to answer at ver. 9, finding that "remnant" which had been lost there through mistranslation. 13. There we glanced at the fact that "*a cubit*" in this verse ought to be "*the cubit*" (so in R.V.). What is wanted is a "*drop*" of a cubit from the top, to screen the dwelling from eyes profanely prying over the court fence curtain wall. That is provided (see under vers. 31-37) for the front of Tabernacle, in the spare cubit of its 40 cubits' length. What *here* is meant by "*the cubit*" is furnished by the 30 cubits' breadth of goats' hair covering of the tent. It is mathematically demonstrable that a rectangular tent covering, with ridge 15 cubits high, and sides reaching to within 5 cubits of the ground, will be almost exactly 14 cubits of breadth on each side; thus leaving the required 2 cubits out of the 30. A small matter of this sort may be very great as proof. The hero King of Ithaca, returning after twenty years of absence in disguise of an aged beggar, was detected by the old nurse when, in bathing himself, she saw that scar which he had received from the boar's tusk in his boyhood, when visiting his grandfather, the royal robber Autolycus. 14. Regarding the place and use of this "*covering*," see above, note on *Elevation*; and regarding the thing mistranslated "*badger skin*," see under xxv. 8. *Above*, in this verse, is by A.V. made quite unaccountable by mistranslation, with misapprehension of the use of the covering. Upon Mr. Gillies' view that the seal-skin covering is the waterproof envelope of the dwelling, the emphatic "*over all*" of the Heb. description becomes clear. Enveloping the whole dwelling when erected, it could at other times be utilised for covering the waggons on the march, like the tarpaulin thrown

15 And thou shalt make boards for the tabernacle of shittim  
 16 wood standing up. Ten cubits *shall be* the length of a board,  
 and a cubit and a half *shall be* the breadth of one board.  
 17 Two tenons *shall there be* in one board, set in order one  
 against another: thus shalt thou make for all the boards of  
 18 the tabernacle. And thou shalt make the boards for the  
 19 tabernacle, twenty boards on the south side southward. And

over goods on board ship, or the oil-cloth similarly used on a carrier's van.

3rd, **The wooden frame** (15-30). This has been the grand *crux* of constructors. Mr. Gillies' expiscation of the matter leaves us nothing to do, but to admire while making use of this fine sample of inductive ascertainment.

Those acquainted with wooden "frame" buildings will see that a dwelling 45 feet long by 15 broad and 15 high, made of compactly united 9-inch beams or planks, or "boards" of a wood like hickory, must be indeed very strong. And here again Mr. Gillies not only overcomes the difficulty, but brings honey out of the lion. The extra cubit at each end, beyond the 10 cubits' breadth of the Dwelling, is found not only to be consistent with his view of the Tabernacle structure as a whole, but in effect to be required by it (which, again, is a strong proof of the view). And besides, in showing us those two extra cubits as resulting in a provision for morticing or otherwise fixing the horizontal bars (at least the middle one) to those corner pillars (we may call them), he enables us to see that the whole fabric was compact as if coopered with steel hoops or girders, very different in cogency from the "undergirding" of those "wooden walls" which once enclosed another tabernacle, very precious (2 Co. v. 1). And the inquiry, pertinaciously thorough, throws a like strong light on the very basis (Ps. xix. 4), of tenons in their silver sockets. This we are bound to say here, because here our notes are only small change of copper for Mr. Gillies' silver and gold.

15. As to the rare Heb. word here for "boards," Mr. Gillies points to the fact of its *not* being that for "boards" of the Ark in xxv. 8 (made "planks" by the R. V.), while it *is* the same as that for "boards" in xxxvi. 20 (where again the reference is to this wooden frame), and it is used in reference to no other structure in the O. T. but the "benches" of Ezek. xxvii. 6, where it is intended to represent great strength of cross-beams of a ship. (On *Shittim*, under xxv. 5.) 17. *In order* (see under xxvii. 33): here **symmetrically** and systematically; board on one side corresponding with board on the other, in respect even of the sockets and their tenons. These *tenons* (lit. "hands") may have been part of the board or plank itself, or they may have been fixed into it (the specifications omit details that are commonplace in use and wont of the kind of work in question). The weight of the silver sockets, 93 lbs. each (under xxxviii. 27), shows that they could be made into what would serve as a "stay" foundation for the whole framework of wooden wall, with sockets formed *in* them (the Heb. word is only general in its native meaning = **base**) as in the top of the leg of a "telescope" table—two for every pillar. The alternative is, that they simply *were* the sockets, fixed solidly in the ground, for protection of the shittim-wood,—for which there is no evidence. 18. The peculiar turn of geographical expression here is by Keil and Delitzsch (*Comm. Ex.*) regarded as implying that *negeb* ("the dry") was only beginning to be used as an appropriate name for "the south," and

thou shalt make forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two sockets under another board for his two tenons. 20 And for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, 21 *there shall be* twenty boards, and their forty sockets of silver: two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another 22 board. And for the sides of the tabernacle westward thou 23 shalt make six boards. And two boards shalt thou make for 24 the corners of the tabernacle in the two sides. And they shall be coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring: thus shall it be 25 for them both; they shall be for the two corners. And they shall be eight boards, and their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board, and two sockets under another board.

that the accompanying expression ("right hand") was added as explanation ("the *negeb*,—that is to say, the south"). This they claim as incidental evidence of primæval authorship of the description (cp. *on strange original face*, Introd. p. 29). As to Heb. ("right hand") *south*: the Tabernacle always faced eastward. The manner of expression here makes the reader place himself mentally so facing. And Canon Cook suggests that the purpose of the double direction was to prevent an Israelite from mentally facing *westward*, as he naturally might do, as looking *at* the Tabernacle front. This too would make a presumption in favour of primæval authorship. Further—20. *Second—north*. Evidently (cp. vers. 18, 22) the Hebrews are here being taught (*orientiren*) to place rightly this habit of looking at matters, to adjust the compass of their minds at this outset of their eventful voyage through time. The *south*, as (in that hemisphere) the region of the sun, was deemed the more honourable (of which same feeling there is a trace in the use of the Scottish Gaelic word *deas* ("right hand") for *south*—with an association of auspiciousness). In the Dwelling the more honourable side was given to the candlestick, with its "lamps of God." 22–25. *Side* here; we now would say *back* (under xxvii. 27).

**NOTE on the two corner back boards.**—Learned men have been troubled here. They have tried to *get rid of* 2 cubits, which these two planks or boards make the back wall to extend beyond 10 cubits. Mr. Gillies, as usual, does not need to get rid of a fact. On the contrary, he needs it. He shows clearly, not only that the two corner boards have a right to exist, but that they have a really important office distinctively their own. Upon Mr. Gillies' view of the subject, that office comes to seek them. 1. From the court enclosure data he finds, that the thickness of a pillar "board" or plank is  $\frac{1}{2}$  a cubit. Hence the end wall, in order to reach as far as the outside of the side walls, has to be  $(10 + 1) = 11$  cubits long. 2. The remaining cubit of the 12, made up by the end boards or planks, is required thus: at each corner  $\frac{1}{4}$  cubit for projection of the silver socket beyond the wood at base; and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cubit clear beyond the western extremity of the side walls, to support the cross bars which reach along the side walls from end to end,—e.g. the middle bar to be morticed into the  $\frac{1}{4}$  cubit of corner pillar thus



26 And thou shalt make bars of shittim wood: five for the  
27 boards of the one side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the  
boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for

ready for it. The effect of this for the whole fabric would be as of a buttress and keystone to an arch. In the nomadic "palace of the king" it is compactness, with light elastic firmness, that maketh strength, where dead weight of bulkiness might be weakness; in stormy Orcadian weather, when an ironclad man-of-war will not dare to look out of harbour, a fishing smack will dart hither and thither among the islands, like a sea-bird. The corner pillar is thus to that Dwelling as the "roof-tree" (as to which, in the palace of Ithaca, Odysseus inquires on his return from Troy). Hence the expression, "they shall be for the two corners," is, far from truism, like naming them Jachin and Boaz. 3. The whole relevant learning goes into a nut-shell; happily, for what is wanted is sense. The key word when by the A.V. made "coupled," makes unintelligibility; nor is the matter much mended by the R.V. making it "be doubled." But the marg. has "twinned,"—and thereby hangs a tale. The Heb. word occurs only here (including xxxvi. 29) and twice in the Song of Songs, where it is made, "have twins," or "bear twins." Well, let it here be, "those pillars shall be twins"—"a pair of them,"—Jachin and Boaz—*par nobile fratrum*, both alike conforming to the type of their six brethren. But how far? Not, as the A.V. hath it, "unto one ring," which again makes unintelligibility; but, as far as the first ring (unto ring No. 1). That is—we will suppose—as far as the highest of the rings, that by which the topmost bar is attached to the side wall. And why so far? And only so far? Because so far, and only so far, Jachin and Boaz can continue to be "twinned," conforming to the family type. For here, if they go any farther, they will jut up into an angle of rugged sharpness, where the goat-skin tent has need of stretching smooth and evenly as a roof. They thus have to be planed out of angularity into evenness, with the rest of the fabric; and Mr. Gillies, out of the nettle danger, hath plucked the flower safely.

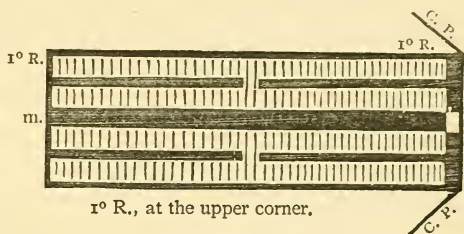
4th, **Completion of the Dwelling** (26-37). The Altar of Incense (initial note on xxv. 1-9) is not prescribed for until a later stage, after the directions regarding sacrificial and priestly apparatus. Otherwise we have here, besides the finishing touch of the bars, a completed dwelling, in readiness for being raised up (ver. 30) as a tent. When we now place ourselves within the Holy, we mark two new features, which give a character to the aspect of the whole we look upon. 1. The Holy Place now is virtually closed at both extremities, so as to be an inaccessible shrine, that can be entered only through privileged initiation. This is by means of what in He. ix. 3 is by implication described as the two veils; though "the veil" of the Most Holy was of a specifically different character from the tent door-curtain. 2. The eye would more be struck with a departure thus created, from the uniformity of aspect which the walls must have presented as first made (or seen with the mind's eye). What now meets the eye, at each extremity of the Holy Place, is not the ornamented white cloth of the sides and roof, but a row of pillars, between us and a curtain which the pillars sustain. Mr. Gillies, who always sees things, shows that the pillars of the veil of the Holiest must have stood on the outer side (our side) of that veil; inasmuch as the priests were bound, in their handling of the veil, always to have it between them and Jehovah's throne over the Kappōreth; and shows also that a good purpose was served by having the pillars of the tent door-curtain similarly placed,—the purpose, namely, of preventing the curtains from being blown in upon the candlestick and shew-bread. 3. However, those two new features, so powerfully affecting the character of the whole aspect of the Dwelling, were essentially like the shining face of Moses,

the boards of the side of the tabernacle, for the two sides  
 28 westward. And the middle bar in the midst of the boards  
 29 shall reach from end to end. And thou shalt overlay the  
 boards with gold, and make their rings *of gold for* places for  
 30 the bars: and thou shalt overlay the bars with gold. And  
 thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion  
 thereof which was showed thee in the mount.  
 31 And thou shalt make a veil *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet,  
 and fine twined linen, of cunning work: with cherubims shall

features of attraction and invitation. For they were essentially of the nature of a *door*, a *lawful way* (Jn. x. 1, 2, etc.) into that presence of God which is life. We see in the Psalms that, as the hart after the water-brooks, so the soul was drawn by that symbolism into a ceaseless longing after that which is behind the veil. And while they thus created hunger and thirsting, they at the same time fed; through sustenance of that faith which (He. xi. 1) is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Our detailed notes here may be highly elliptical. 1. *The Bars.* 26-30.

The middle bar alone may have reached from end to end of a side wall or of the back (under xxvii. 33). Two bars reaching half-way would, along with the middle bar, cause every plank in that half length of the wall to be kept in its place by three bars, as well as by the two sockets



1° R., at the upper corner.

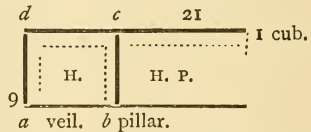
at its base. The side of the wooden frame would thus consist of two compartments, like the two parts of a door or gate meeting in the middle; and the middle bar would be as the lock or bolt, to unite the two compartments into one side wall. These middle bars, firmly attached, say by morticing, to the corner pillars, would bind the whole fabric into unity. The half-way pillars are like the secondary ribs in basket work. The middle bar has the effect of a "chief corner-stone," which holds the house together by being built into the two walls meeting in the angle. The whole would thus be all of one piece, "light as a basket," and strong as a tower of steel. The basket frame would be outside, like the skeleton of a crab. But that would be concealed by the seal-skin envelope over all. The inside of the wooden frame, supporting the linen Dwelling, would be smooth,—continuous as a plaster-wall supporting paper or tapestry. On the materials here, see under xxv. 3-5.

2. *The Veil* (31-37). This is the veil: *paroketh*. As to the word for

1° R. at the upper corner of C. P. (corner pillar), shows where Jachin and Boaz are "twinned."

- 32 it be made: and thou shalt hang it upon four pillars of shittim wood overlaid with gold: their hooks shall be of gold, upon the four sockets of silver.
- 33 And thou shalt hang up the veil under the taches, that thou mayest bring in thither within the veil the ark of the testimony: and the veil shall divide unto you between the
- 34 holy place and the most holy. And thou shalt put the mercy-seat upon the ark of the testimony in the most holy place.
- 35 And thou shalt set the table without the veil, and the candlestick over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle toward the south: and thou shalt put the table on the north

hooks here, see under ver. 10. *Hang* is commentary: the Heb. word is = place. As to workmanship, here first-class, see under ver. 1. *Under the taches.* The word for *taches* being unique (under ver. 11), shows that the veil was right under *that thing*, in the "coupling" of the two half-tabernacles. This corroborates what is otherwise ascertained by Mr. Gillies the sleepless; coinciding as it does with the view (under ver. 13, and initial note on *the Dwelling*, xxvi.) that the veil pillars were 11 cubits distant from the back wall of the Holiest. Hence, the 20 cubits of half-tabernacle cloth, at the west end of the Dwelling, would, when let down as back wall of the Holiest, reach only to within a cubit of the ground. It would thus in this respect be uniform with the side walls, to which the 28 cubits afforded only 9 each from the roof. And at the east end of the Dwelling there would, of the 40 cubits, be 1 cubit to spare for a hanging at the front (east face) of Dwelling; as we saw that 1 cubit of similar hanging along the side walls was afforded by the 30 cubits (*minus* 28) of the goats' hair covering of the tent (under xxv. 13). The minute exact adjustments, thus coming in search of recognition, are the strongest possible proof of the general view in whose light they disclose themselves. A falling apple is a small matter—to a savage; to a Newton, it is universal gravitation.



3. *Furniture* of the two places (34, 35). *Mercy-seat*: see note on the Kappōreth, xxv. 17. Here observe, in the manner of representation, that the Kappōreth was not a mere lid of the ark, but that the ark was a prepared base of the Kappōreth. Here the ark plainly is regarded and treated as already in existence, a completed thing, before the Kappōreth comes upon that completed thing (as the Lord shall suddenly appear in His temple). The notion of a box that is waiting for its lid is quite out of keeping with the representation of the ark here, as distinctly as is the imagination, that the Kappōreth is the lid of a box that has (logically) been turned into a seat—as if Robinson Crusoe had been making the most of his savings from the wreck. "The Table." Manifestly the purpose now is, not to introduce that Table to man's knowledge, but to assign to it, a known thing, its due true place. That place (under ver. 20), though honourable, is not the first in the Sanctuary. There (Ge. i. 3) the first place is held by that Revelation

36 side. And thou shalt make an hanging for the door of the tent, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, wrought with needlework. And thou shalt make for the hanging five pillars of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold, and their hooks shall be of gold: and thou shalt cast five sockets of brass for them.

(Jn. i. 1) which watches (He. iv. 12) the consecration of the people's life, with eyes which are as a flame of fire (Re. i. 12-15).

4. *Door curtain of the tent* (36, 37). In the representation of Canon Cook, adopted from Mr. Fergusson, the front pillars, framework of this "door," are (unwarrantably) placed 5 cubits forward from the Dwelling, instead of being on east end (all "door") of the Dwelling itself (see Mr. Gillies' notes). The Heb. word for *door* has the general meaning of opening (e.g. into a house or tent). The English word has thus to be used somewhat freely as a general expression. The nature of the particular thing has to be gathered from the description of it and the use assigned to that thing. Here the description is somewhat vague. Nor are we much assisted with details by the description (xxvii. 16) of the court curtain gate (on which Mr. Gillies' notes are peculiarly interesting as well as instructive). The workmanship here (under ver. 11) is second-class: only embroidery with needle (Keil and Delitzsch hold that it is not even that, but a sort of striped cloth—"loud" colours). The material, too, is inferior: *brass* (bronze), not silver; and goats' hair, not fine twined linen. That is to say (silently), This is not Jehovah's Dwelling, but only its tent "covering." (Note on words, under xxv. 7.)—The court gate, right opposite, is precisely the breadth—20 cubits—of the whole verandah front of this tent (see it in Mr. Gillies' figure, No. 3). There are five pillars of the tent gate. That would make four spaces of 5 cubits each. The two middle spaces—10 cubits—are thus precisely the whole breadth of the Dwelling, which is five cubits back from the verandah front, and right opposite that 10 cubit middle space of that front. A curtain in that middle space, of 10 cubits high (as well as 10 broad), thus was in effect as an east wall for the Dwelling, which otherwise has no screen between the Holy Place and the open-air court. The curtains if placed *outside* of the pillars would by these be kept from being blown in upon the candlestick and shewbread (cp. under xxvii. 10). It is supposed that the curtains may have been fitted to draw up. It is known that the supporting pillars were somehow connected by what our Version makes "fillets"—now understood to be *connecting rods*; and, that they were gilded at the top (xxxvi. 38). Observe that Mr. Gillies, an expert tent-builder, does not, like Canon Cook and Mr. Fergusson, make any pillar differ from the (10 cubits) height of the Tabernacle, but the middle one (15 cubits), which alone he wants for a tent.

THE ALTAR AND THE COURT (xxvii.). With us the place of worship is for a congregation's accommodation. In heathen lands the temple is the residence of a god, to which men go (Mat. ii.) as to the palace of a king. Israel's tent and Temple were the Dwelling of

CHAP. XXVII. I. And thou shalt make an altar of shittim wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad: the altar shall be four-square: and the height thereof *shall be* three cubits.

“the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God.” A court (“close,” “precincts”), such as we now find here prescribed, was a natural adjunct to the residence of deity. To that the people could come; there the sacrifice might be offered:—within the House of God they could not be offered with propriety and convenience. In Israel, while only the High Priest could enter the Holiest (He. iv. 14–16), the Holy Place could be entered only by the priests. But the people of God, though not official priests, could enter the Court. Here was the fundamental public worship of the nation. But it was the nation (priestly, Ex. xix. 6) through its representative (He. ii. 13), the individual Israelite as well as the collective Israel (Re. xxii. 17), that entered the Holy Place daily in the common priesthood, and that in the High Priest went into the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement (Mat. xxvii. 51; 2 Co. iii. 18; He. x. 19–22).

1st, **The Altar** (1–8). This is the first appearance of an altar as an abiding institution: heretofore an altar arose on occasion when sacrifice was to be offered (see first since Jacob's time in xvii. 14–16). In ver. 1 the Heb. is “*the altar.*” There was to be only *one* altar; and the place of it was to be only (indicated divinely) where Jehovah had placed His name (xx. 24)—a principle (see the reasons for it under xx. 24, 25) of which the permissible application may not have been rigidly stereotyped:—hence we now cannot reason from particular cases, which may really be unintelligible to us. The word for *altar* here is first employed (Ge. viii.) for that on which Noah sacrificed after the flood. By use and wont it has (under iii. 13) the appropriate meaning of, place for *bleeding* sacrifice. This particular altar of the nation—“*the altar*”—was notoriously for no other purpose: “the altar of **burnt-sacrifice**” was its proper name (the horns of the altar of incense, too, were smeared with blood of sacrifice). What is thus set forth in the altar service is not vaguely deliverance from sin in any sense (of the lost sheep, or lost piece of money). The laver provided for that in the sense of deliverance from sin as pollution, cleansing the affections. What the altar sacrifice meant was, deliverance from *condemnation* (Ro. viii. 1, v. 12–20; He. x. 1–5), from sin as involving *guilt* (the prodigal son). As the shewbread, consecration of the people's life to God, is (at this stage of the direction) the one thing on which the light looks from the golden candlestick within; so here, in the open air, before heaven and earth, the one thing on which the sun shines, in that court where the people draw near to God, is *propitiation* (Ro. iii. 25; 1 Co. v. 18–21; Ga. iii. 13).

1. *Wood* (boards, in ver. 8). The hollowness made possible an escape of ashes, etc., from the top. The timber was sheathed against the altar fire by bronze. This prescribed use of wood and brass must have been somehow consistent with the principle of the fundamental law (Ex. xx. 25), that an altar should be only of earth or of unhewn stone. It is thought that there was an altar of earth or unhewn stone contained *within* the wood and brass as envelope; so that constructively, not the wood and brass, but the earth or unhewn stone, was really the altar. This suggestion, very ancient,



- 2 And thou shalt make the horns of it upon the four corners thereof: his horns shall be of the same: and thou shalt over  
 3 lay it with brass. And thou shalt make his pans to receive his ashes, and his shovels, and his basons, and his flesh-hooks, and his firepans: all the vessels thereof thou shalt make of  
 4 brass. And thou shalt make for it a grate of network of brass; and upon the net shalt thou make four brazen rings in  
 5 the four corners thereof. And thou shalt put it under the compass of the altar beneath, that the net may be even to the  
 6 midst of the altar. And thou shalt make staves for the altar, 7 staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with brass. And the staves shall be put into the rings, and the staves shall be  
 8 upon the two sides of the altar, to bear it. Hollow with boards shalt thou make it: as it was showed thee in the mount, so shall they make it.
- 9 And thou shalt make the court of the tabernacle: for the south side southward *there shall be* hangings for the court of

is reasonable; but we have not express information of the fact. *Four-square*: thus conforming to the general tabernacle type of things: the form was, further, in various ways suitable for altar use. 2. *Horns*—of the same: of one piece with the altar: prominences supposed to have resembled a horn in shape. 3. (under ver. 19). The Heb. here for *vessels* has different meanings in different places. Here it means, *implements* or *apparatus*, of which there was considerable variety. *Fire-pans*: the Heb. word is applied to so many things that it probably is a commonplace thing that could be turned to any use—pannikin of all work. 4-7. This description has occasioned a good deal of discussion. A good central suggestion—conjectural hypothesis—is, that the *compass* was a sort of narrow platform (under xxviii. 39-43, xxix. 16), like a stair step all round, as part of the structure of the altar near the top (“Compass” the altar in Ps. xxvi. 6, is a different word; but the *thing* may be, go round on that platform). Thus, a strong frame at the base of this, on the outer side, would (1) sustain that platform, and (2) by means of the rings and staves it would serve as a sort of hand-barrow for carrying the whole altar fabric of which it was a part. 8. Here still, continually, according to prescription (cp. *Altare Damascenum*). The *material* in the Court may be inferior: the *rule*, the spirit, the religion, is ever the same = “serve” God (no “will-worship”). This is the foundation of Israel’s covenant with God (xxiv. 1-8).

2nd, *The Court* (9-19). NOTE.—Except at the gate, the court wall of curtains would be the natural colour of the linen. To one looking from the outside, there would thus appear, over their five cubits of white, the *red* ram-skin roof of the tent; as if a mountain of flame rose out of a basis of snow. Mr. Gillies points out this, as well as the striking effect of the *flame-pillar* light on that red. It is with a characteristic study of this Court that he begins (*Notes*: APPENDIX). 9. *Tabernacle* here (see note on *words*, xxv. 6, 7) has a comprehensive meaning (*denominatio fit a majori*): the dwelling

- fine twined linen, of an hundred cubits long, for one side.  
 10 And the twenty pillars thereof, and their twenty sockets, *shall be of brass*: the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *shall be of silver*. And likewise for the north side in length *there shall be hangings of an hundred cubits long*, and his twenty pillars, and their twenty sockets *of brass*: the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *of silver*.  
 12 And *for the breadth of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits*: their pillars ten, and their sockets  
 13 ten. And the breadth of the court on the east side eastward  
 14 *shall be fifty cubits*. The hangings of one side *of the gate shall be fifteen cubits*: their pillars three, and their sockets  
 15 three. And on the other side *shall be hangings, fifteen cubits*: their pillars three, and their sockets three.  
 16 And for the gate of the court *shall be an hanging of twenty cubits, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen,*

is made to include the precincts. *South* (under xxvi. 20). It is not *known* how far the Tabernacle was placed back toward the west end of the Court. A very fair suggestion (powerfully recommended by the number 5 cubits now in a manifested right of command) is that it was placed so as to leave at the back the same (5 cubits) amount of free space for perambulation as there is known to have been along the two sides—*i.e.* 5 cubits. That would occupy 50 cubits with the Tabernacle, and leave 50 cubits for the Court. 10. *The twenty.*

It would seem that the number of pillars is here expressly made 60. But some learned men make it out 56, by a way they have of counting four twice. It is to be feared that this ingenuity is in the interest of getting them out of a difficulty. And Mr. Gillies, *looking at the thing*, finds no difficulty in it, but proof. (Thus “to him that hath shall be given.”) *Fillets*: really connecting rods. The Heb. for *hangings* here is rare and peculiar: which, it is suggested, may imply that these curtains were hung in a peculiar manner. They might be placed so as to flap somewhat loosely: which could not be allowed in the case of the *tent-door curtain* (on which, see under xxvi. 36, 37). 13. *East eastward*: lit. east frontward. Men faced the rising sun, and named the points of the compass, *front, right, back, left*. 14, 15. This left in the middle of the east side 20 cubits for the Court gate. Otherwise the arrangement all round was completely uniform: a height of 5 cubits with (curtain) “breadths” of 5 cubits. Mr. Gillies here deduces the breadth and thickness of pillars, and the structure of the bases with sockets for tenons. 16. See under xxvi. 36, 37. The word here for *gate* is the same as there for *door* (theologically, Jn. x. 1, 2, it is the *lawful*



The black represents space occupied with ropes, and by tent door screens.

- wrought with needlework: *and* their pillars *shall be* four, and  
 17 their sockets four. All the pillars round about the court  
*shall be* filleted with silver: their hooks *shall be* of silver, and  
 their sockets *of* brass.
- 18 The length of the court *shall be* an hundred cubits, and the  
 breadth fifty everywhere, and the height five cubits *of* fine  
 19 twined linen, and their sockets *of* brass. All the vessels of  
 the tabernacle, in all the service thereof, and all the pins  
 thereof, and all the pins of the court, *shall be* *of* brass.
- 20 And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they  
 bring thee pure oil-olive beaten for the light, to cause the  
 21 lamp to burn always. In the tabernacle of the congregation  
 without the vail, which *is* before the testimony, Aaron and  
 his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the  
 Lord. *It shall be* a statute for ever unto their generations on  
 the behalf of the children of Israel.

entrance). *Filleted with silver*: has to mean, **connected by silver rods**—for the curtains to hang on. The ornamented face of the curtain would be outward (“grace, mercy, peace”); from within there would appear (“holiness”) the simple unembroidered white (“beauty when unadorned is adorned the most”). [Here we part from the guide to whom we owe so much.] 19. *Vessels* (see under ver. 3). Here evidently it is apparatus that is **not a part** of the worship, but employed in course of it, or in connection with it. *Pins*—*e.g.* tent-pegs.

3rd, **Supplementary** (20, 21). It is not known how or why this instruction came to be recorded here. The first thing God’s people are to provide for is, **light** in the Holy Place. *Beaten* oil is the best that can be of its kind. *Burn* here means, **keep lighted**. The *always* does not show that the lamps were kept burning all the day; we read the newspaper “always” if we read it daily. *Aaron and his sons*: they thus are already somehow known about, or are now made known, as the future priesthood. *N.B.*—*Tabernacle of the congregation* ought to be **tent of meeting** (under xxv. 22). This is the **first appearance** of that descriptive title. *Statute for ever*: great solemnity.

**The Priestly garments** (xxviii.). 1. *Extreme Ritualism* of everything here brought into view. (1) The *persons* who “serve” are not ordinary citizens of God’s kingdom, but officials. (2) The *service* is not in the ordinary course of duties to God and man; they are distinctively priestly, under the two heads of oblation and intercession. (3) The *vestments* make the priest. These are plain facts in the historical condition. They are here the more vividly impressive on account of their being *here*: where there cannot have been any natural growth of them, nor so much as a distinct creation of them. There has been no time, and there is no opportunity, to make possible the existence of a hierarchical party, with domination of caste influence of priesthood, in that one year’s old “kingdom of priests” (xix. 6). There is no Aaronic priesthood in actual existence: there is nothing but the clothes as yet, and these are only ordered, not made. 2. **Inference**: *Ritualism has now no right to exist*. The conditions of its existence are completely wanting:—the sacrifices, the Tabernacle, the ark,

- CHAP. XXVIII. I. And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, *even* Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons.
- 2 And thou shalt make holy garments for Aaron thy brother,
- 3 for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt speak unto all *that are* wise-hearted, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that
- 4 he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And these *are* the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and

the place where Jehovah hath put His name. The only sacrifice was offered eighteen centuries ago (He. x. 27), except that offered by ordinary believers (1 Pe. ii. 5) in their common life (Ro. xii. 1). The only priest is in heaven (He. iv. 14-16). The only place (Jn. iv. 1, etc.) is the open air, where the only two Dwellings are, man's temple, God in the resurrection Christ, and God's temple, the contrite heart of man. That old Ritualistic constitution is gone completely; and, like the baseless fabric of a vision, has left not a wrack behind.

3. That thing is here, on record high and sacred, for our study (1 Co. x. 11). (1) It shows the kingdom of God in its original condition: constitutional history nourishes enlightened patriotism (1 Co. x. 1-6). (2) It shows Bible religion in its infancy—*i.e.* what to avoid. Imitation of childhood is childish, not childlike (1 Co. xiii. 10, 11). Second childhood is lamentable, imbecile decadence from rationality (He. v. 12, 13). That which is natural and pleasing in an infant—babyism—is disgusting because unnatural in a grown man (Ga. iv. 9). But the study of childhood is important for philosophers and advanced Christians (Is. li. 1; Ezek. xvi. 1-4; Mat. xviii. 3). (3) It brings vividly into view, in a "figure" of Old Testament *type* (the Gr. for "pattern" in He. viii. 5), the mind of God, in sovereign free redeeming love (Ex. xxxiv. 4-7). Those who put the picture in place of the original are idolaters; but those who see the original through the picture are Christians (2 Co. iii. 17, 18). Their exercise we see in the Epistle to the Hebrews, expository of the true priesthood, sacrifice and intercession. But the thing exists in all Christian minds, which is made by Tabernacle theology.

1. *Minister*: the Heb. word here (*cohen*) means, not ordinary service, but distinctively priestly action; lit. "to priest unto me." The selection of Israelites for this work proceeds upon the fact that natively the priesthood is in all Israel (xix. 6). This particular family, however, are to be not simply a *sample* of Israel as if taken at random. They not only are of Israel in a common priesthood, but distinct from that common priesthood in a special office. The mention of Nadab and Abihu here, where their sad *finale* is not out of mind, and the immediately following narrative of Aaron's part in idolatrous worship, show us that the efficacy of the service does not proceed from any "virtue" in the men; clothes do not really make a man, much less a Saviour God. 2. *For glory*: representing the majesty of things divine; *for beauty*, the seemliness of rightly serving God. The garments were *holy*, because, like the Sabbath, they were devoted to this purpose of religion by the will of God. *Wise-hearted* (under xxxi. 6). In the Bible generally, as here, the heart is the seat of wisdom. The species of wisdom here in question is sense, mother-wit, "*nous*," in the particular form of skilled artisanship. That is a gift of the Divine Spirit, working in and

an ephod, and a robe, and a broidedered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office. And they shall take gold, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen.

6 And they shall make the ephod of gold, of blue, and of purple, of scarlet, and fine twined linen, with cunning work.

7 It shall have the two shoulder-pieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together. And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And thou shalt take two onyx stones, and grave on them the names of the children of Israel: six of their names on one stone, and the other six names of the rest on the other stone, according to their birth. With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, shalt thou engrave the two stones with the names of the children of Israel: thou shalt make

through the human spirit (Job xxxii. 8). (No bunglers here! to spoil clothes and waste time, and do the thing badly after all.) The details of costume here can be best studied in pictures, e.g. the Sunday School Union's little book (price 2d.) on *The Tabernacle*, by Mr. Dillworth. *The whole* is full official dress, intended to show from the outset that the man is not to be worshipped, but God. *N.B.*—A minister's gown and bands are not official, but only the full dress of a public speaker ("the word"). *They shall take:* these shall take,—it is those skilled hands that are to handle these precious materials for a great purpose. 6-12. *The ephod:* the ephod. It was distinctively the priestly garment (cp. Jud. viii. 27, xvii. 5). In its full form, it is appropriately for the High Priest only. But (1 Sa. xxii. 15) an ordinary priest might wear a humble form of ephod; even some (1 Sa. ii. 18) who were not priests might; and even (1 Sa. xxiii. 9, xxx. 7) it is thought that the garment might sometimes be put on by a king. It was worn over the heart. It reached from the shoulders, apparently both behind and before, to below the waist. The rare and precious girdle was symbolical of Israelitish compact strength, succinct in readiness for sacrifice and all service (He. xii. 1, 2). But most precious and rare was that pair of shoulder-pieces, on which the High Priest bore the names of Israel's children before God (Is. ix. 6, cp. He. ii. 12, vii. 25). The etymology of the word "ephod" is uncertain. The thing was simply a garment or vesture, which came to have a special meaning through the use of it. In itself it was ordinary cloth, ornamented in the Tabernacle style. *Curious girdle:* about this there is not agreement: *of the same*, means that it was an essential part of the ephod. The point of real meaning is that it was to hold the ephod close upon the breast. *Onyx:* in our own and other versions it is not certainly known what the species of this stone was. *Stone—engraving—e.g.* of rings or seals—was practised in Egypt before Israel entered it, and in Mesopotamia before Abraham left it. *The broidedered coat*, underlying all,



- 12 them to be set in ouches of gold. And thou shalt put the two stones upon the shoulders of the ephod, *for* stones of memorial unto the children of Israel; and Aaron shall bear their names before the Lord upon his two shoulders for a memorial.
- 13, 14 And thou shalt make ouches *of* gold; and two chains *of* pure gold at the ends; *of* wreathen work shalt thou make them, and fasten the wreathen chains to the ouches.
- 15 And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it: *of* gold, *of* blue, and *of* purple, and *of* scarlet, and *of* fine
- 16 twined linen, shalt thou make it. Four-square it shall be, *being* doubled; a span *shall be* the length thereof, and a span
- 17 *shall be* the breadth thereof. And thou shalt set in it settings of stones, *even* four rows of stones: *the first row shall be* a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: *this shall be* the first row.
- 18 And the second row *shall be* an emerald, a sapphire, and a
- 19 diamond. And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an
- 20 amethyst. And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a
- 21 jasper: they shall be set in gold in their enclosings. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, *like* the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.
- 22 And thou shalt make upon the breastplate chains at the
- 23 ends *of* wreathen work *of* pure gold. And thou shalt make upon the breastplate two rings of gold, and shalt put the two
- 24 rings on the two ends of the breastplate. And thou shalt put the two wreathen *chains* of gold in the two rings *which are* on

showed the "tabernacle colours" (under xxv. 4). *Ouches*: a setting, it may (vers. 11, 12) be, of twisted gold, holding the stone as a button may be held. 13, 14. Here the ouches are ornamental fastenings (buttons?) for the breastplate chains. The chains, *wreathed*: not linked but corded. 15-21. Our version has *breastplate* because the thing was worn on the breast. The Hebrew word (*choshen*) means simply ornament. The specialty of it here is, *judgment* (ver. 29, Israel there is judged, being justified before God). *Doubled*: folded in two, so as to make a square of a span's ( $\frac{1}{2}$  cubit) breadth. Some think that the doubling was meant to make a bag, between the folds, for the Urim and Thummin: it is more generally thought to have been simply for strength of the article. The various species of the twelve stones are inquired about by antiquarians. Bezaleel knew, and we may rely upon it that they were all right. For the rest, *we* have not to make the article. *Every one—tribes* (ver. 21): Every stone had a tribe's name (cp. Re. vii. and xxi.). 22-25. The chains, fastened to the shoulders by the ouches,

- 25 the ends of the breastplate. And *the other* two ends of the two wreathen *chains* thou shalt fasten in the two ouches, and put *them* on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod before *it*.
- 26 And thou shalt make two rings of gold, and thou shalt put them upon the two ends of the breastplate, in the border
- 27 thereof, which *is* in the side of the ephod inward. And two *other* rings of gold thou shalt make, and shalt put them on the two sides of the ephod underneath, toward the forepart thereof, over against the *other* coupling thereof, above the
- 28 curious girdle of the ephod. And they shall bind the breastplate by the rings thereof unto the rings of the ephod with a lace of blue, that *it* may be above the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate be not loosed from the ephod.
- 29 And Aaron shall bear the names of the children of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart, when he goeth in unto the holy *place*, for a memorial before the Lord continually.
- 30 And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart when he goeth in before the Lord: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the Lord continually.
- 31 And thou shalt make the robe of the ephod all of blue.
- 32 And there shall be an hole in the top of it, in the midst

had hold of the breastplate by its corners nearest to the shoulders. 26-29. These two pairs of rings were to be not conspicuous themselves, but holding the breastplate in its place by connecting it at its lower extremity with the front of the ephod, at its junction ("coupling," our *other* here is worse than useless) with the girdle, or its transition into the girdle. The one pair of rings was in the lower front ephod; the other, in the lower extremity of the breastplate; and they were connected, each to each, by a lace of blue (ribbon). (The detailed *expression* here is a little confusing.) Regarding *judgment* here, as a thing not to be forgotten, see Is. xi. 27, cp. He. iv. 14-16. 30, 31. *Urim and Thummim*: the words are supposed to mean something like **Light and Truth**. They are first spoken of here, but referred to (xxxix. 21; Lev. viii. 8) as if previously existing. In ver. 30 they seem to be *into* the breastplate, as if thrust into a bag (ver. 16) formed by its two folds. They apparently were not used ordinarily, but only on emergent occasions of perplexity, such as called for appeal to the lot. They disappear from Israel's history with the earliest of the kings. And about the preceding use of them very little is really known. 31, 32. The form of this simplest possible garment may be seen at Iona, in the mail shirt of old Celtic chiefs. The word for *habergeon* (Canon Cook) is found in old Egyptian; and a corresponding thing, a sort of corselet, is seen on the monuments. The *hole* is simply for the head to pass through; and the firm

thereof: it shall have a binding of woven work round about the hole of it, as it were the hole of an habergeon, that it be not rent.

- 33 And *beneath*, upon the hem of *it*, thou shalt make pomegranates of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, round about the hem thereof; and bells of gold between them round about: a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about.
- 34 And it shall be upon Aaron to minister: and his sound shall be heard when he goeth in unto the holy *place* before the Lord, and when he cometh out, that he die not.
- 35 And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, *like* the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE
- 36 LORD. And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre: upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be.
- 37 And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts; and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord.
- 38 And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou

*binding* of woven work is obviously needed there to secure against the tear and wear of use. The blue as background would bring out into vividness the ornamentation of the ephod with its breastplate. The *pomegranates* must have been tassels in fruit shape, along with real bells. Such a use of bells is in a measure natural, and has in various ways appeared among the peoples. Here the use is expressly spoken of as the purpose. One announces his approach before venturing into the privacy of a superior. But the sound of Aaron's bells might be heard by men outside the veil, and move them to think of the great work of intercession going on within the veil. The resurrection of Christ is now in the sound of Sabbath bells that summon men to remember the Creator. The awful warning here is in connexion with a small matter which "concerns the king." The *plate* before the mitre (on its *elevation*, under xxxix. 31), as the ark before the Dwelling and the altar before the Court. "Holiness to the Lord" (note on *words*, xxv. 6, 7), henceforward appearing in many ways, is responsive to the testimony—the moral law—in the ark. It shows what God loves, what the High Priest has to be, and what the people have to be made. Those eyes of the candlestick (Re. i. 12-15) see *iniquity* even in the *holy things*, the actions of the people's consecrate life. The inscription on the High Priest's brow acknowledges the sin of that iniquity; and when he uncovers that, God covers it. This, too, is a shadow of which there is only one substance (Act. iv. 12). The *mitre* was a head-dress, about which nothing is specified. It would be like a turban. The identical plate is supposed to be traceable to Byzantium, and thence to Jerusalem in the time of Belisarius (Edersheim: *Temple and Services*). 39-43. *Breeches*, drawers. *Aaron's sons* are here the ordinary priesthood. The *bonnet* was their head-

shalt make the mitre *of* fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle *of* needlework.

- 40 And for Aaron's sons thou shalt make coats, and thou shalt make for them girdles, and bonnets shalt thou make for  
 41 them, for glory and for beauty. And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that  
 42 they may minister unto me in the priest's office. And thou shalt make them linen breeches to cover their nakedness;  
 43 from the loins even unto the thighs they shall reach. And they shall be upon Aaron, and upon his sons, when they come in unto the tabernacle of the congregation, or when they come near unto the altar to minister in the holy *place*; that they bear not iniquity, and die. *It shall be* a statute for ever unto him, and his seed after him.

dress, probably with nothing remarkable in its form. The "for glory and for beauty" has reference to their costume as a whole, and (ver. 2) as part of the whole system of the priestly vestments. The consecration did not take place till the Tabernacle was erected. It is prescribed here as essential for carrying out the Tabernacle plan. *When they come down*, refers to the structure of the altar (see on *compass*, under xxvii. 5). It favours the suggestion that the altar about midway up was surrounded with a narrow platform, on which the priests in their ministration stood. *Put them upon*: the first literal "*investiture*." *Query*: In the great case between Pope and Prince about Investiture, had Moses his due place, or He of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did speak?

**The Priestly Consecration with Appendix (xxix.).** 1. Observe that "consecration" (notes below, and on *holiness*) means **induction into office**. Here is the first historical appearance of a CHRIST ("anointed"), and that in the central office of mediation, and with a view to the fundamental action of that office (offering sacrifice). The great act of consecration here appears at the close as in comprehensive relation to the whole system of divine redemptive proceedings. But it is hardly conceivable (cp. 1 Pe. i. 10-12) that any Israelite should have comprehended the matter as it is comprehended by those upon whom "the ends of the world" have come. 2. As compared with the wide open air of the patriarchal age, we here see a shrinking, as of a blossom into fruit (which is to be for the healing of the nations, Ge. xii. 3). How men like Jethro might be affected by the narrowing limitation which arose out of the progressive distinctness of definition, we may endeavour to divine from the references to Melchisedek in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Relatively to this point the striking thing in that *sacerdotal* epistle is that the *Hebrew* mind appears as assigning to an outsider, whose appearance was only momentaneous, as that of a meteor or falling star, a rank of excellence and *permanence*, as compared with which that priesthood, which was the glory of the Hebrew nation, was only a series of fleeting shadows. David, too, saw that the true priesthood must needs be royal (Ps. cx., cp. Ex. xix. 6). It is unscriptural to look at the old history with the eyes of Jewish rabbis. The historical anachronism is injurious to the Truth in Him who is before Abraham was. And the theological mistake puts us out of the right point of view for seeing this Messiah in Exodus xxix. We must endeavour to place ourselves in the Abrahamic point of view;

CHAP. XXIX. I. And this *is* the thing that thou shalt do unto them, to hallow them, to minister unto me in the priest's office: Take one young bullock, and two rams without  
 2 blemish, and unleavened bread, and cakes unleavened tempered with oil, and wafers unleavened anointed with oil; *of*  
 3 wheaten flour shalt thou make them. And thou shalt put them into one basket, and bring them in the basket, with the  
 4 bullock and the two rams. And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congrega-  
 5 tion, and shalt wash them with water. And thou shalt take the garments, and put upon Aaron the coat, and the robe of  
 6 the ephod, and the ephod, and the breastplate, and gird him with the curious girdle of the ephod: and thou shalt put the  
 mitre upon his head, and put the holy crown upon the mitre.  
 7 Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, and pour *it* upon his  
 8 head, and anoint him. And thou shalt bring his sons, and

or look on the matter through the eyes of Jethro, or even of Balaam, who could admire a star, though he loved the darkness rather than the light,—like others who have said in song what they contradicted in life, *Videō meliora proboque, deteriora sequor*. What would a servant of the true God, not of the commonwealth of Israel, have seen in that consecration? Perhaps we cannot know. The Pentateuchal Exposition of Ritual is in Leviticus. In the study of Exodus, it does not fall to us to aim at a full view of that subject. It is our part only to look at those aspects which it presents toward the history in Exodus; as it looks in, so to speak, upon the preparation of that Tabernacle which is destined to be the central home of the Ritualism.

NOTE.—The standing law for sacrifice and consecration, as appearing in this initial act, is laid down in Le. i.—viii. It is to be remembered that the induction in this case, like the sacrifice in xxiv., was one that, from the nature of the case, could not be repeated. The vestments of Aaron were to be assumed by his successors. In his induction the office was inaugurated. Hence the mode of procedure in this case was not completely a precedent for after times.

1. *Hallow* (cp. "consecrate," ver. 9): the word is the common one for sanctify—make holy. *Without blemish* (1 Pe. i. 19): lit. perfect. 2. The bread, which all was unleavened, was thus otherwise of three sorts: (1) simply baked with water; (2) baked with infusion of oil; (3) sprinkled with oil. Life in all its varied fulness was to be consecrated to God. 4. *Door—congregation*: ought to be, *entrance of the tent of meeting*. Meeting is made the vital result: (1) In the Holy of Holies, xxv. 9; (2) in the tent, xxvi. 21; and (3) here, at the door of the tent (see note on "meeting," xxv. 22). *Washing* (under xxx. 20, 21, and xxix. 42) is a common symbol of religions (cp. anointing, under ver. 6): meaning purification (the scriptural "baptism"). Here between the brazen altar (bleeding sacrifice) and the Dwelling, the laver is to be, so that (He. x. 22) the priests may always purify themselves before entering the Holy Place. 5. *The garments*: it is assumed that they are known about. The crown, symbol of royalty (xix. 6; 1 Pe. ii. 9), is not specified in xxviii. 6. CHRIST (Gr. for "anointed," Heb. Messiah); *the anointing*: is peculiar to the Bible



- 9 put coats upon them. And thou shalt gird them with girdles, (Aaron and his sons,) and put the bonnets on them: and the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual statute: and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons. And thou shalt cause a bullock to be brought before the tabernacle of the congregation: and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the bullock. And thou shalt kill the bullock before the Lord, *by* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put *it* upon the horns of the altar with thy finger, and pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar. And thou shalt take all the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul *that is* above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, and burn *them* upon the altar. But the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn with fire without the camp: *it is* a sin-offering. Thou shalt also take one ram; and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram. And thou shalt slay the ram, and thou shalt take his blood, and sprinkle *it* round about upon the altar. And thou shalt cut the ram in pieces, and wash the inwards of him, and his legs, and put *them* unto his pieces, and unto his head. And thou shalt burn the whole ram upon the altar: *it is* a burnt-offering

religion (cp. with washing under ver. 3). It is supremely in Christ (Is. lxi. 1; Lu. iv. 16, etc.; Mat. xi. 2, etc.). The oil means the Spirit of God (Jn. i. 33). 9. *Theirs*: it shall be in this family. *Consecrate* (cp. "hallow," ver. 1). The Heb. is lit. fill his hand. A man was inducted into office by putting into his hand the symbols of it. *A bullock*: lit. the bullock—*i.e.* the aforesaid. 10. Here again the correct expression is tent of meeting. *The door* (under xxvi. 36, 37) was probably 10 cubits wide; but the description may fairly include the whole Court east of the tent (under xxvii. 10). *Their hands upon*: identifying themselves with it; so that (2 Co. v. 14) when the sacrifice was slain for sin, they died unto the law (Ga. ii. 19). The priests (He. ix. 1-3, cp. v. 26) were sinners, requiring to be saved from death under the law. 11. *Thou, Moses*: until the officials are fully inducted the mediator officiates. *Tent of meeting* (always). *Horns of the altar are smeared*, laying the matter on the power of God. 12. *The blood*, kept in basins, was poured or flung at the foot of the altar. ("God be merciful to me a sinner.") This on behalf of the **High Priest**! 13. *The fat*: and other specified portions, regarded as *excellent*, worthy of a feast. 14. On the other hand, the rest was cast out and destroyed in a manner that pictured strongest abhorrence (cp. He. xiii. 11, 12). *It is a sin-offering*: lit. the sin-offering (is) this;—showing what God gives and the sinner needs, and what sin deserves (2 Co. v. 21; Ga. iii. 13). 15. *One ram*: of the two. 16. *Round about*: see on the *compass* under xxvii. 5. *Sprinkle*: not smear, nor pour out, as with bullock's blood. 17. The parts that were

unto the Lord: it *is* a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

19 And thou shalt take the other ram; and Aaron and his  
 20 sons shall put their hands upon the head of the ram. Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put *it* upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the  
 21 blood upon the altar round about. And thou shalt take of the blood that *is* upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle *it* upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him: and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his  
 22 sons' garments with him. Also thou shalt take of the ram the fat, and the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards,

defiled were cleaned, in order that the whole, clean, might ascend in the flame. 18. *Sweet savour* (see note on *Sacrifice* under xii. 21-36).

NOTE on "Sweet savour" (cp. under ver. 25).—The expression, first employed in connexion with Noah's sacrifice (Ge. viii.), came to have a wide use in the sphere of Israelitish offerings, in which "almost all things were purified by blood," to show specially that "without shedding of blood there is no remission" (He. ix. 22). It is applied to the self-offering of Christ (in love) for us to God (Eph. v. 2). It is what is represented in theology by the (Law-Latin) word "satisfaction;" which in evangelical theology means a gratified feeling of justice (as well as mercy), in that there has been expiation of the guilt (while there is salvation of the guilty sinner). *This* for the **High Priest!**

Observe, as compared with the "sin-offering," this is defined as the *burnt-offering*. The use and wont word *olah* means **ascending** (into the sky, in the flame). The compound expression here describes the altar offering distinctively of **bleeding sacrifice**. 19, 20. This one of the sacrifices is peculiar to this one occasion (thus ver. 27, "the ram of the consecration, which is for Aaron and for his sons"). As in the people's covenanting (xxiv. 1-8), so here, God and man are brought into oneness of life through sacrifice. As there the people's part was devoted obedience, so here what is set forth in the symbolism is complete self-surrender to God (Ro. xii. 1):—the *ear* receiving orders (see on *slave's* "ear," under xxi. 1-6; and on the *soldiers*, in Lu. vii. 8, 9), the *thumb* and the *toe*,—man's nervous power to handle and to run (man is the only creature that has a thumb,—such an organ of *reason*, and the toe is a sort of foot-thumb) (see on dividing the Ten Words into 5's, initial note to xx., and on the *number* 5, under xxvi. 10); the whole of the "body," as living temple, is devoted to reasonable service of God; as to the *foot*,—the "good man" of the O. T., Ahimaaz,—see 2 Sa. xviii. 27,—*ran* swift and far to shield a father's heart by telling about victory to the king. 21. This further process exhibits the awful hatefulness of sin (cp. "hating even the garments that are defiled by the flesh"). *Consecrate* here and in ver. 22 (see under ver. 9) is **filling the hand**. 22. *Rump*: the **tail**: the variety of sheep in view of Moses was one in which the tail may be

and the caul *above* the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that *is* upon them, and the right shoulder; for it *is* a ram of  
 23 consecration: and one loaf of bread, and one cake of oiled  
 24 bread, and one wafer out of the basket of the unleavened  
 25 bread that *is* before the Lord. And thou shalt put all in the  
 hands of Aaron, and in the hands of his sons, and shalt  
 wave them *for* a wave-offering before the Lord. And thou  
 shalt receive them of their hands, and burn *them* upon the  
 altar for a burnt-offering, for a sweet savour before the Lord:  
 26 it *is* an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And thou shalt  
 take the breast of the ram of Aaron's consecration, and wave  
 it *for* a wave-offering before the Lord: and it shall be thy  
 27 part. And thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave-offering,  
 and the shoulder of the heave-offering, which is waved, and  
 which is heaved up, of the ram of the consecration, *even* of  
 that which *is* for Aaron, and of that which *is* for his sons:  
 28 and it shall be Aaron's and his sons', by a statute for ever  
 from the children of Israel: for it *is* an heave-offering: and  
 it shall be an heave-offering from the children of Israel of the  
 sacrifice of their peace-offerings, *even* their heave-offering  
 unto the Lord.  
 29 And the holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons' after

more than a stone in weight,—thus very valuable. 23, 24. Here we almost see the literal process of Moses putting priesthood into “the hand” of Aaron and his sons. In the “heave”-offering (under xxv. 1, 2) the gift is raised up (*God-ward*): in the “wave”-offering it is moved horizontally on the offerer's own level, as if diffusing among his fellow-men, signifying fellowship with brother men in what is excellent (1 Jn. i. 3). The process here was: when the things are in their hands, his hand under theirs *causes* their hands to “wave” the things as an offering. So—by what Heb. grammarians might call a Piel movement, “causative”—on the part of the mediator, the offices pass from him into their hands. 25. The *savour* gains here (under ver. 18) an additional shade of meaning. When Aaron is pardoned and accepted, his particular services are acceptable to God, not because they are good in themselves, but also because in him they are priestly. Now the only priesthood on earth is that of believing Christians. And the two principal apostles, of the circumcision (1 Pe. ii. 5) and of the Gentiles (Ro. xii. 1), place upon that footing the whole of a common Christian life; God is pleased with the well-doing of His Christians, not only because in it they are good men, but also because in it they are good priests. 26–28. *Wave—heave* (under vers. 23, 24). The *sanctify* here is, setting apart as “unto the Lord” (ver. 28); in the particular way of giving it to the priests here observe a third name, *peace-offerings*, given to the sacrifices which we have heard of as “burnt-offerings” and “sin-offerings.” The distinctions thus beginning to appear are wrought out in the Levitical system. 29, 30. The mantle of that priestly consecration thus fell on the successors. Eleazar, Aaron's son,

him, to be anointed therein, and to be consecrated in them.

30 *And* that son that is priest in his stead shall put them on seven days, when he cometh into the tabernacle of the congregation to minister in the holy *place*.

31 *And* thou shalt take the ram of the consecration, and  
32 seethe his flesh in the holy place. *And* Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram, and the bread that *is* in the basket, *by* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

33 *And* they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate *and* to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat *thereof*, because they *are* holy. *And* if ought of

34 the flesh of the consecrations, or of the bread, remain unto the morning, then thou shalt burn the remainder with fire: it shall not be eaten, because it *is* holy. *And* thus shalt thou

35 do unto Aaron, and to his sons, according to all *things* which I have commanded thee: seven days shalt thou consecrate

36 them. *And* thou shalt offer every day a bullock *for* a sin-offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt

37 anoint it, to sanctify it. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar, and sanctify it; and it shall be an altar most holy: whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.

and Eli are the only two successors of his that we know about before the time of the kings. 31. *Consecration*: lit. hand-filling. *The holy place*: lit. a holy place or spot. Of course not in the Dwelling. It would be in the Court, on the altar, where, too, the Lord had put His name. 32. *Tabernacle*, etc., not making this, as it ought to be, Tent of the meeting, they miss two points. 33. (Cp. xxxii. 30, notes.) The Heb. word for *atonement* (see note on *kopher* under xxi. 33) here coming in, is *Kipper*, that which goes to make the Kappôreth (on which see note under xxv. 17)—covering in the sense of pardoning (cause of). Excepting Ro. v. 11, our word *atonement* in Sc. is appropriated to the (propitiation) Kappôreth. As to plur. here, *atonements*, cp. (parable of the sower) “mysterics” and “mystery”—the one is manifold, the many are one. *Stranger*, here (cp. xxx. 10, 33), needs only to be no priest: an outsider in this respect, though he should be an Israelitish king or prophet. 34. To prevent its being applied to any common purpose, e.g. making money by means of Sabbath traffic, or “liberalizing” the mind by paganizing the soul. 35-37. This to all appearance means that the great act was repeated until seven times, on so many successive days. Of a sevenfold repetition there are several other cases recorded. But this great act itself is not repeated (it is thus like circumcision). It has not a successor but a “fulfilment.” And the need of that fulfilment (“what the law could not do,” Ro. viii. 3) is shown by the purification even of the altar, normally the ideal of unapproachable sacredness.

38 Now this *is that* which thou shalt offer upon the altar; two  
 39 lambs of the first year, day by day continually. The one  
 lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb  
 40 thou shalt offer at even: and with the one lamb a tenth deal  
 of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil;  
 and the fourth part of an hin of wine *for* a drink-offering.  
 41 And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do  
 thereto according to the meat-offering of the morning, and  
 according to the drink-offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an  
 42 offering made by fire unto the Lord. *This shall be* a con-  
 tinual burnt-offering throughout your generations, *at* the door  
 of the tabernacle of the congregation, before the Lord; where  
 43 I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there I will  
 meet with the children of Israel, and *the tabernacle* shall be  
 44 sanctified by my glory. And I will sanctify the tabernacle  
 of the congregation, and the altar; I will sanctify also both  
 Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office.

**Appendix to the consecration directory (38-46).** This is plainly a directory for ordinary priestly service of God. But, especially through the great promise at the close, it is connected with the great original act, as if to show the result of that act in abiding sample. And it so connects the priesthood with the altar as to show that the priesthood has not come into the place of the altar, but that the altar is the true basis of all priestly activities (cp. 1 Jn. ii. 2, 3; Ro. iv. 35).

38-40. *Israel's daily sacrifice*: showing the people's daily life as consecrated unto God continually (Act. xxvi. 7; He. xiii. 15). It is supposed that the *wine* (Phi. ii. 17) was poured on the altar as a libation. The bread and wine together, the strength and joy of life, were in the drink-offering, which Canon Cook supposes to have been in the Shewbread service (under xxv. 29). *At even*: lit. **between the evenings** (under xii. 6). 41. The *measure* is the prescribed measure; what precisely that may be is only an antiquarian question. Here observe, like the evening stars coming into view, or the spring flowers, other expressions appearing: *drink-offering* and *meat-offering* (Ge. xxxv. 1, 4). They are *by fire*; and *for a sweet savour*. 42. **Tent of meeting**: this is the *proof passage* as to correct translation, which is peculiarly requisite here, so as not to spoil the text. (1) Of **meeting** (under ver. 3), for Jehovah is to *meet* His people and converse with them; and (2) that (xxv. 22) not only in the innermost shrine, approachable only for the representative High Priests, but **at the door of the tent**, to whose verandah the people might gather from the Court. In this festivity (cp. xxiv. 9-11) *the king comes to the door* to converse with them there! thence appropriateness of "**the tent of meeting**" (mœd). This feeling was strong in the national religious heart: thus as to temple (1 Ki. viii. 27). 43. Is *tabernacle* the right word to supply here (in italics of A.V.)? There was no tabernacle where Moses first found "*holy ground*" (iii. 5). It is **Israel**, or the **Court**, that is sanctified by the manifested presence of Jehovah (cp. Lu. ii. 32). 44. And thereupon (in continuation) there are sanctified



45 And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will be  
46 their God. And they shall know that I *am* the Lord their  
God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that  
I may dwell among them : I *am* the Lord their God.

CHAP. XXX. 1. And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense  
2 upon : of *shittim* wood shalt thou make it. A cubit *shall be*  
the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, (four-

the tent of meeting, the altar, the priest,—all to the effect of what is represented by the Dwelling (under xxv. 8), an effect which follows from Redemption in their deliverance from Egypt. So that we are brought back to the *formula* of Royal Proclamation (under vi. 2, 3 ; see Introd. pp. 67, 68) so often heard in Egypt.

THE CHAPTER OF OMISSIONS (xxx.). It is a fact that every one of the articles in this chapter is omitted in the place to which it is ultimately found to belong. The writer may have recorded the directions in the order in which they recurred to his "remembrance" (*recollection*, Jn. xiv. 26). Or the original direction may have had them in the order in which he now records them. Upon either view there may be some principle of order in the placing of them in this direction, though not the obvious principle on which they are placed in the erection. We might, for instance, see a principle represented by a fanciful heading, "the Incense Chapter." That is to say, in addition to the simply essential things represented by the Shewbread (honourable) and the Candlestick (more honourable), here (most honourable) is a culmination rising out of those things. Even the Redemption shekel might thus be regarded as like the widow's mite, the highest thing in the form of such contributions. For it places prince and pauper on the one level of the publican who went home justified (Lu. xviii. 9-14). It shows that even Dives has a soul (worth 15d.); and that the rich man was mistaken who regarded his soul as only subservient to swine feeding, of "take thine ease ; eat, drink, and be merry." It is good for him to be reminded of his fallen greatness as a man.

1st, **The Altar of Incense** (1-10). Its place is in the Holy, and in the Holiest its offering is found. The Psalmist, along with morning and evening sacrifice (Ps. cxli. 2), places his prayer as incense. And John (Re. ix. 4) similarly saw "the prayers of saints" as the one thing passing into heaven from earth. The altar may have come last, as, like the Kappōreth, that *for* which the earlier things prepare the sanctuary (He. ii. 10).

1. *An altar . . . incense.* Its position is in the Holy Place. In the order of the nature of the things there, perhaps it ought to come last because highest. The very name of *altar*, ordinarily appropriated for designation of the place of bleeding sacrifice, is significant, if not of precedence as compared with the Shewbread and of the Candlestick, at least of the peculiar preciousness of "a broken and a contrite spirit" (Ps. li. 16-19) in the sight of God. 2. It is yet further assimilated to the altar of burnt-sacrifice by having *horns* (under xxvii. 2) ; and still further (ver. 10) in the

square shall it be :) and two cubits *shall be* the height thereof ;  
 3 the horns thereof *shall be* of the same. And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof : and thou shalt make  
 4 unto it a crown of gold round about. And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof ; upon the two sides of it shalt thou make *it* : and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal.  
 5 And thou shalt make the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlay  
 6 them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the veil that *is* by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy-seat that *is* over  
 7 the testimony, where I will meet with thee. And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning : when he dresseth  
 8 the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your genera-  
 9 tions. Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat-offering ; neither shall ye pour drink-offering  
 10 thereon. And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the sin-offering

same direction by their being on the Day of Atonement smeared with the sacrificial blood, the incense altar thus being made as if a continuation of the Brazen Altar, though the application of the blood here was for a different purpose. 3. The *crown*, which we have seen both on the ark and on the shewbread table,—*i.e.* wherever there was a place for that,—shows unity of style. 4. *Corner*: makes the verse unintelligible, and is not the meaning of the Heb. word. *Ribs* (R. V.), lower than the corner, are a strengthening and “staying” belt. And, as in the case of the shewbread table (xxv. 25, 26), they will make a good position for attaching the rings for the staves. But here the rings required are not four, but two, one on each side ; and for carrying purposes they are “placed,” not at “corners,” but at the middle of each side : no doubt much closer to the “crown” than the band of the Table is. The height of this altar, as compared with that of the Table, the ark, and the Brazen Altar, speaks of a different purpose and general “figure.” Here still we see that the *Kappōreth* is not simply a part of the ark, but a distinct thing (note on the *Kappōreth*, under xxv. 17). Here again the *meeting* (under xxv. 22, xxix. 42). 8. *Sweet incense*: lit. incense of perfumes. *At even*: lit. between the evenings (xii. 6). Does this evening lighting of the lamps imply that they did not burn through the day (xxv. 37)? 9. This to maintain the distinctness from other altar offerings, and at the same time show the peculiar sacredness of this offering for its own purpose. *Strange incense* (cp. “strange fire” of Nadab and Abihu): here has to mean what is **not according to the Lord’s direction** (note under vers. 34–38, cp. xxix. 33). 10. On *atonement* see note on the *Kappōreth*, under xxxv. 17. In Lev. xvi. 18, 19, we find that the purpose was to cleanse the altar from the uncleanness of the children of Israel (see under

of atonements ; once in the year shall he make atonement upon it, throughout your generations : it *is* most holy unto the Lord.

- 11, 12 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel, after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them ; that there be no plague  
13 among them, when *thou* numberest them. This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary : (a shekel *is* twenty gerahs :) an half shekel *shall be* the offering of the  
14 Lord. Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering  
15 unto the Lord. The rich shall not give more, and the poor

xxix. 37). *It is—Lord*: lit. “Holy of Holies to Jehovah this,”—a formula of utmost sacredness.

2nd, The Redemption half-shekel (11-16) (see on redemption of beasts, under xii. 11-16). This would, as mere money collection, have come in at xxv. 2-7, in the prescription for meeting the cost of erecting the Lord's House. But there is a contrast represented by the fact that while there the emphasis is laid upon free-will in the offering, here the very point is prescribed taxation, the same in amount for all ; and this, as a ransom of the souls of men ; a different thing specifically from the 30 shekels in xxi. 32, where see note. The circumstance that the produce of the tax is destined specifically for the House of the Lord (cp. xxxviii. 27-31), goes to show, as a reason for the uniformly small amount, that every Israelite, even the humblest, should have “a stone in the building,” so that in a sense all Israel *was* the House of the Lord (cp. 1 Pe. ii. 3, 4). On the other hand, there was a “levelling down” (cp. Ja. i. 9, 10). Still the emphasis was on ransom, under penalty of plague. *Taking the sum*: this may not have been a regular census, but only a counting heads of those who came with the tax (see curious fact as to the number, under xxxviii. 29). 13. (Under xxxviii. 22, etc.) It is not certainly *known* that the Sanctuary shekel was really different from the common shekel in value, as a pound avoirdupois differs from a pound Troy. The expression here may mean simply such a payment (cp. “good measure,” Lu. vi. 38), so just and full, as becomes those who are serving God in the building of His house. As money originally was not coined, but weighed (witness, “a silver *pound*”), the facilities and temptations relatively to “clipping” or “sweating” may perhaps have been so much the more a matter of anxious interest to receivers of payment : Ananias and Sapphira thus had to be warned in the public interest. *Gerah*: lit. a bean (so our “barley corn” as an ultimate standard of measure). Such a natural standard is liable to variation or arbitrary construction (cp. “about the size of a lump of chalk”). The simplicity of the “interpretation clause” here is like that implied in “the south southward” (xxvi. 18), suggestive of primæval origination. 14-16. In xxxviii. 27 we find that the specific destination of this tax was to make the Sanctuary sockets. Hence the silver was in this case not simply value (Scoticé, “siller,” cp. Dr. Johnson, “their

- shall not give less than half a shekel, when *they* give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.
- 16 And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.
- 17, 18 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt also make a laver *of* brass, and his foot *also of* brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein.
- 19 For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet
- 20 thereat: when they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when

pound is only twenty pence"), but actual material; so that every Israelite had *literally* "a stone in the building," namely, his half-shekel weight of the silver foundation. The Egyptians were great in statistics; and the Hebrews have been famous financiers. Would the calculating habit be fostered by their thinking of their very souls as "bought with a price"? Hal o' the Wynd (*Fair Maid of Perth*) saw the symbolism of one's being *bound* by being even paid wages. Peter (1 Pe. i. 18) and Paul (1 Co. vi. 20), while knowing that the true ransom price is Infinite, still saw the obligation to service constituted by Redemption ("to live as a man that is redeemed,"—Hedley Vicars). Observe *Atonement* at ver. 16 as well as at ver. 10. The man who can imagine that his half-shekel is the real ransom-price, is a bad bargain at 1s. 3d.—a slave is dear at any price. Christ had something to say about *money* as representing *value*, from the lowest form of that conception to the highest,—*e.g.* the "penny," and "what shall it profit." But one may turn this conception, too, to evil,—in a shipwreck only one man was drowned, who was sunk by a belt of gold: he may have begun with a light "shekel" at a church collection.

**The Laver (17-21).** It may at least aid the memory to observe, that there is an omission under every one of the three heads:—1. of contributions, the silver tax is omitted; 2. of Holy Place furniture, the altar of incense; and now we see, 3. of Court provision, the laver. The laver, though, like the incense and the shekel, not absolutely necessary to salvation, is vitally important: "Your bodies washed with pure water." *Personal* sanctity really *is* salvation in its fruit (Ro. viii. 22; He. xii. 10, 14). It is to be observed further, that while the incense especially affected the priesthood entering the Holiest, and the shekel the male *Israelite* (Eph. v. 3; Lu. xvi. 14), the laver came home to the women, in—shall we say?—*their* peculiar idolatry of the looking-glass (1 Pe. iii. 3).

18. A *Laver* is a *bath* for washing *the body* (not clothes, He. x. 22), such as (under ii. 5) Pharaoh's daughter sought in the Nile when she found Moses (as Saul found a kingdom when searching for asses). The form of this laver is not known, nor the arrangement about water; for Solomon's Brazen Sea is no authoritative guide in this case. 19, 20. This might seem unfavourable to dipping in baptism,—*the first prescribed baptism*:—especially as the thing (Ti. iii. 5) signified is the regenerating Spirit of God, who is represented as

they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering  
21 made by fire unto the Lord. So they shall wash their hands  
and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for  
ever to them, *even* to him and to his seed throughout their  
generations.

*poured* on men, as anointing oil, even as fire. But, while ordinarily (cp. Jn. xiii. 10) the priests washed only hands and feet, on the other hand (xxix. 4, Lev. xvi. 4), on the great occasions, which (as not recurring, Jn. xiii. 10) may be compared to Christian baptism, the whole body was washed. Perhaps it is best to remember that the one thing *invariably* meant by scriptural "baptism" is *purification*, as a personal thing; and Naaman has to learn that it is not the water that cleanses, but Israel's redeeming God. However, we students of Exodus have to see as a fact, that in the Red Sea baptism (1 Co. x. 2) those that were dipped were drowned, the saved were only sprinkled. *Nota bene* in xxxviii. 8. *The material of this laver was the looking-glasses of the women which assembled at the tent of meeting.* Our Version has *the women* in italics, as if they were not in the tent. But Moses has them folded in the (feminine) form of the verb (*assembled*). The looking-glasses would be of burnished *bronze* (the Exodus *brass*). It is interesting to see women here again (cp. Ex. ii.) coming into a place of "honour" (1 Pe. iii. 7 and Fifth Comm.) in connexion with the kingdom of God (as when *ladies* built the Free Assembly Hall in Edinburgh). The Israelitish women knew that the deepest degradation of their sex through sin had a specially close connexion with the temple-worship of heathenism;—a connexion arising out of that attractiveness (cp. 1 Pe. iii. 1) which looking-glass idolatry, making a doll-idol of what has a soul, turns into an instrument of the profoundest degradation conceivable for a creature of God. Did Miriam, the strong-minded, head a "women's rights" movement in this matter? These movements do not generally take *that* direction, of sacrificing female vanity for the purity of God's House. But even a strong-minded female has a soul, as indeed a Zipporah likewise has (Mat. xiv. 21).

**The holy oil (22-33).** (The real facts regarding composition of this oil, spices, etc., and other difficult subjects in this last part of Exodus, have been carefully explicated by an acknowledged master, Canon Cook. To him and to Dr. Rawlinson we have pleasure in owing obligation, especially in relation to those subjects.) We saw "the oil" in the prescription (xxvii. 20, 21) regarding the precincts of the Dwelling. And already it has appeared that the oil is an essential element in this religion: if only blood reach the throne of grace, yet the oil has to be in the anointing of the lamb of God (Act. x. 38), and in the consecration of His mediatorial offices (prophet, *priest*, and king). *As a symbol of purification, the oil is peculiar to the Bible religion.* So is the thing it signifies, the efficacy of the Holy Spirit. Mr. Gladstone, in his enthusiastic Homerology (which we will not call Homerolatry), finds in Athené an analogue of the all-pervasive intelligent *energeia* of that omnipresent Spirit. But her devotedly true servant Odysseus—tender-hearted laird of Ithaca, as well as tough indomitable heart of oak in manhood—had not the remotest conception of "holiness" in the Bible sense, nor one spark of that adoring love which is the Bible "fear of God." It is only Christ that Christens. It is "the Holy One of God" that "shall baptize with the Holy Ghost." *He is the Christ.* And as for "civilisation" without *that*—"Scratch a Russian, and you have a Tartar:" Witness the life of heathenism in its heart—of Athens the radiant—of (even) Socrates the wise, yea, the humble (we may say).



22, 23 Moreover, the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred *shekels*, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, *even* two hundred and fifty *shekels*, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty  
 24 *shekels*, and of cassia five hundred *shekels*, after the shekel of  
 25 the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin. And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the  
 26 art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil. And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation there-

The *odi profanum vulgus et arceo* has, at this tent door, a meaning that is not dreamed of in the world's philosophy.

22-24. According to tradition, Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar, the "three kings" buried at Cologne, brought to the new-born King of the Jews a homage-gift of respectively gold, frankincense, and myrrh. As regards the holy oil, distinctively Christian (*Christ* means "anointed"), Moses here shows Gentile peoples at the feet of Christ 1500 years before. Their "speech bewrayeth" them (cp. the contrary *miracle* of the Pentecost anointing, Act. ii. 1, etc.). The antiquarian difficulty here arises from the *strangeness* of the words describing articles. And to us that strangeness gives the *historical fact*, that the world gave its remotest treasures to this new kingdom, and the King began to be "found of them who sought Him not." In a deeper sense, all "civilisation" was on its way toward contribution of material for the new enlightenment. This, in the later ages, while Rome, the great road-maker, prepared the way of the Lord, Greece gave the Scriptures (Sept.) to mankind, and the Roman and Greek civilisations have been appropriated by that Christendom which first appeared visibly in Aaron's anointing; as at the beginning the Tabernacle was constructed of Egyptian "spoils," and afterwards Tyrian hands were employed for the skilled work of the Temple-building. The statements here in specification of the natural productions employed are significant to that effect intended for those who (like the present writer) are not skilled naturalists. *Myrrh* here is what is everywhere known as such. It proves its identity in various lands by retaining substantially that name in various languages which are not sister tongues (cp. Act. ii. 7, 8). The *pure* is that which is obtained, without pressure, by natural exudation (cp. Zaccheus) from an Arabian tree, which is "low, thorny, ragged." *Five hundred shekels*: "probably rather more than 15½ lbs." (Canon Cook). *Cinnamon* is similarly identified. It is the inner rhind of "a tree allied to the laurel that grows in Ceylon and other islands of the Indian Ocean" (C. C.)—so that its roots may have been nourished by moisture from the Antipodes. *Two hundred and fifty shekels*: "probably about 7 lbs. 14 oz." (C. C.). *Sweet calamus*. The Heb. *kaneh* is common for cane, reed, stalk. Here it is specifically sweet; and may be what now is "known in India as the Lemon Grass" (C. C.). *Cassia*, Heb. *Kiddah*, occurs elsewhere only in Ezek. xxvii. 19. The word is not what the Heb. has in Ps. xlv. 8; but the same kind of *thing* is what is meant there. The ancient versions generally, and modern authorities universally, take the things here to be, a "cassia which is the inner bark of an Indian tree" somewhat different from cinnamon. (*The words in this connexion marked as quotation are ordinarily Canon Cook's.*) *Art of the apothecary*: employ the best attainable skill (cp.

27 with, and the ark of the testimony, and the table and all his  
 vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of  
 28 incense, and the altar of burnt-offering with all his vessels,  
 29 and the laver and his foot. And thou shalt sanctify them,  
 that they may be most holy: whatsoever toucheth them shall  
 30 be holy. And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and  
 consecrate them, that *they* may minister unto me in the priest's  
 31 office. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel,  
 saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me through-  
 32 out your generations. Upon man's flesh shall it not be  
 poured; neither shall ye make *any other* like it, after the  
 composition of it: it *is* holy, *and* it shall be holy unto you.  
 33 Whosoever compoundeth *any* like it, or whosoever putteth  
*any* of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his  
 people.

"college-bred" ministers. "God can do without my knowledge." "Yes"—said Robert Hall,—“and without your ignorance”); here the “art” is Bezaleel’s (xxxvii. 29), no doubt instructed in *this* “learning of the Egyptians” (there are medical treatises found in their mummy coffins). Mark the repetition of *holy*, in order to the *sanctum sanctorum* (under ver. 10) in ver. 29, of the priesthood as well as of the incense. *Oil—oil*: it is to be *only for this one purpose* (vers. 31–33). Inviolable sacredness of things here passes to a *person*; because to the person there is attached a *thing*—namely, official service (here again the expression lit. is, “priesting it” to me, or, for me). A minister who does not minister, *is* he a minister?—*e.g.* if he only “discharge archidiaconal functions”? On threat of *plague*, cp. under xv. 25. *Toucheth—holy*. In the South Sea Islands there takes place a sacred appropriation under the custom of *tabu* or *tapu*; and the sacredness has come to have the double meaning of the Latin *sacer* (either blessed or accursed—*i.e.* devoted either way, to the “infernal” or to the “supernal” transcendent—as the Greek *anathēma* (in Lu. xxi. 5 for *gifts*) passes into *anathēma* (Gr. for *accursed* in Ga. i. 8)). Here we see the sacredness present a side of terror which is in the essence of its nature. That comes out in vers. 32, 33. This *excommunication* arises out of the nature of the society (Ge. xvii. 14). In xxxi. 14 we see a penal sanction, connected with apparently the same sin, which amounts to death. The extreme penalty, there expressly prescribed, gives effect to the principle of Theocracy, that a sin against God is at the same time a *political crime* against the king and the kingdom. What, if any, the temporal penalty may have been under the Mosaic discipline, we really do not know. It is astonishing how much otherwise honourable men will affirm of what they do not know. We do know, from the highest authority, that the Jewish tradition—which some regard as all but oracular—was the opposite of a trustworthy witness. And in the *Civil Code* we saw that the Mosaic legislation was in its character *humane*. We thus may assume that excommunication involved no severity of temporal penalty beyond what was necessary for the spiritual purpose of it (1 Co. v. 5). And the specification of the death-penalty in some cases shows that *ordinarily* it did not accompany or flow from the spiritual excommunication. The in-

34 And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; *these* sweet spices, with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like *weight*.  
 35 And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art  
 36 of the apothecary, tempered together, pure *and* holy. And thou shalt beat *some* of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will  
 37 meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy. And *as for* the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be  
 38 unto thee holy for the Lord. Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.

cense (34-38). *Stactē* is Gr. for a dropping, which also is the meaning of the Heb. word here. The thing was, a gum from a tree; but it is named only here. *Onycha* is in substance a Gr. word (*onyx*), originally meaning nail (*e.g.* of finger). It was given as name to the (nail-like) shell of the fish from which the spice was obtained. *Galbanum*: here in the Gr., really is a Heb. word with a Gr. face. Named only here; but the thing is well known in medicine. *Frankincense*: "the most important of aromatic gums." The tree is supposed not to have grown in either Palestine or Arabia. *Tempered together*: lit. salted,—Canon Cook thinks that the meaning may be literally, seasoned with salt. Here again we see the principle, that a thing common in itself may become sacred simply by the will of God—*e.g.* the Lord's Day; and that a sin against sacredness is peculiarly hateful in its impiety,—*e.g.* breaking the Third Commandment. Profanity is even by the heathen regarded as evincing utter godlessness; and in their tragedy—*Œdipus*—in-advertent profanation is followed by terrible vengeance of the gods—*e.g.* sailors of *Odysseus* eating the sacred cattle. The divine laws against profanity have a deep ground in the natural conscience and heart of men. And the terrible severity of the penal sanctions was thus fitted to lay hold of men with its lesson of reverence, dread of offending, "*the fear of God.*" Perhaps even the seeming arbitrariness and superficialness of the formality (38) is fitted to give a deeper sense of the reality. Thus the *a fortiori* argument in He. x. 29 applies.

OF THE EPISODE, Chaps. xxxi.—xxxiv. The beginning of xxxv. is in real continuity with the close of xxx.; and it is otherwise not unlikely (see *Introd.* p. 60) that the two great sections of direction and erection were in existence as completed documents before the composition of the existing Book of Exodus began. In that case the historian made use of them as materials ready to his hand; made ready, it may be, by his own hand, in writing down, first the direction as received from the Lord, and thereafter the account of the erection as the work went on from stage to stage. For the purpose of his history, the present episode had to be inserted somehow as a vitally important part of the constitutional history of those foundation weeks and days.

CHAP. XXXI. 1, 2. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, See, I have called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of

A true episode is not a mere digression. It is a side stream which is the main stream turning aside and really continuing the movement from which it seems to have departed. And the present episode, naturally arising from what goes before it in the history, greatly enhances the interest of what follows. Its origin is immediately connected with the mysterious disappearance of Moses, and his protracted absence (xxiv. 18), operating upon carnal minds, prone to unbelief, and so to superstition as of panic (Is. xxviii. 16). And the great and joyful effusion of liberality in contributions for the building (xxxv.) receives a peculiar colouring of interest if regarded as the outflow of a joy of restoration to the light of God's countenance on the part of a people who have been kept waiting through a dark night of sorrow in humiliation for the sin of apostasy from God. Israel, in the erection of the Tabernacle, will thus appear as rearing a monument to the truth, which was long after set forth clearly by "an Hebrew of the Hebrews." "It is a faithful saying, worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief." The nation's experience will thus fall to be regarded as a precursor of the experience of the Apostle of the circumcision, whom (Lu. xxii. 31, 32) Satan desired to have, that he might sift him like wheat; but there was an all-prevailing intercession for him, that his faith might not fail, so that he was restored from his lapse in order that when converted he might strengthen the brethren.

The narrative regarding the worship of the golden calf has three connected parts: 1. *The descending of Moses*; 2. *the exposure*; and 3. *the restoration*.

1st, **The descending of Moses** (xxx.). Here we see no longer the wise master builder receiving specifications of the plan of God's Dwelling, but the faithful servant (He. iii. 6), on wing with a message to the unfaithful from the Lord. It might be an overstraining to make the injunction about the Sabbath a precautionary measure for prevention of Sabbath desecration through excessive zeal in building. Moses himself is apparently the only one likely to be in danger of being thus "righteous overmuch." And what he is directly charged with is a message to the people regarding their duty and privilege—building or no building—in connexion with that holy rest which is for all generations. The first part of the message, while it has reference to the work of which he is to have charge, yet especially bears upon the actual manual labour of those "hands" which are to do the bodily toil where Moses is the directing brain. His mind thus is now turned in the direction of the camp, and his heart to impulsive guidance of his people in the way of those commandments which he bears in his hands from the Lord.

1. *As to the work* (1-12). 2. *By name* (under xxxiii. 17). Not simply to call, nor simply to name. It is to designate specially for an appointed mission (cp. Act. ix. 15). *Bezaleel* always has the leading place, even when *Aholiab* is spoken of at the same time. He had in special charge the smith-work of the erection, while the weaving was the special charge of *Aholiab*.



3 Hur, of the tribe of Judah : and I have filled him with the  
 spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in know-  
 4 ledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning  
 5 works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in  
 cutting of stones, to set *them*, and in carving of timber, to  
 6 work in all manner of workmanship. And I, behold, I have  
 given with him Aholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe  
 of Dan : and in the hearts of all that are wise-hearted I have  
 put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded  
 7 thee ; the tabernacle of the congregation, and the ark of the  
 testimony, and the mercy-seat that *is* thereupon, and all the  
 8 furniture of the tabernacle, and the table and his furniture,  
 and the pure candlestick with all his furniture, and the altar  
 9 of incense, and the altar of burnt-offering with all his furni-  
 10 ture, and the laver and his foot, and the clothes of service,  
 and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments  
 11 of his sons, to minister in the priest's office, and the anointing

The *Hur* who was his grandfather is presumably that Hur who otherwise is so honourably placed in this history : it may be idle to refer to the tradition, which possibly is a mere fancy, that this Hur was the husband of Miriam.

3. Here we see true "consecration of art." The expression here, *the Spirit of God*, would not in isolation have sufficed as a proof of the distinct personality of that Spirit in the Godhead. But, being otherwise aware of the personality, here we may see the Person. The divine inspiration given to this high-class artificer did not (see *Intro.* pp. 74-78) supersede his natural human faculties and attainments ; but employed them, purifying and exalting them, directing them to a lofty application. *Wisdom* here (cp. i. 9, 10) may be taken for *general mind power*, especially of native good sense ; understanding, for *penetrative intelligence*, the acuteness of a clever man ; and *knowledge*, for the comprehensive mental furniture of an expert, master of his craft, and of all thereto pertaining. He is not "a cobbler," skilful only at "his last," but a man with a disciplined original faculty of thought and action,—qualified as the sun is for ruling the day it oversees, and fills with life in joyous movement (see under xxxv. 30-35).

4, 5. Devise cunning works : lit. as if, devise devices (cp. *Odysseus—kerdēa egnō*). The details of material and of structure referred to are all specified in the directory. The charge to Moses, adhere strictly to the "pattern," did not exclude the exercise of artistic skill in the style—*e.g.* of the cherubic figuring, or the moulding of the "borders." Cp. the "style" of David, and Isaiah. There is even in this sense a seemingly "beauty" of holiness : an ugly church is like a tawdry Christian woman, a disgrace to religion. *Wise-hearted* : cp. xxviii. 3 ; and observe *I have given* : God here proceeds as desired by Augustine, "Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt."

7. Tent of meeting. 8-11. *Pure* : of pure gold. The articles here specified are all referred to in the directory excepting *cloths of service*. The Heb. word (*serad*) for *service* is found only here and in xxxix. 1. The original meaning of it can only be guessed at. The Sept. rendering means "garments



oil, and sweet incense for the holy *place*: according to all that I have commanded thee shall they do.

- 12, 13 And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it *is* a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that *ye* may know that I *am* the Lord that doth sanctify you. Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it *is* holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth *any* work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Six days may work be done; but in the seventh *is* the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth *any* work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. Wherefore the children of

of service." A fair suggestion is, that *clothes of "serad"* is like our "vestments," a general expression for the priestly, and especially the high-priestly official costume. If it had been any particular article of such importance as to have this place here, there would have been description of it.

2. *As to the Sabbath (12-17). My Sabbaths.* There were various "Sabbaths" (lit. rests). 13. This one is identified as the seventh day by these marks: (1) by what is said about it as a sign (vers. 13, 17); and (2) specially by the reference to the six days of man (ver. 15) and of God (ver. 17). That the heathens long after regarded this Sabbath as distinctive of the Jews, may appear from the fling of Juvenal, referred to by Rawlinson (*Sat.* vi. 159). Observe that the Son of man is Lord of "*the Sabbath*," and the Son of God by His teaching will "give us Sabbath" (*rest*) in His heart, from the Father (*Mat.* xi. 27-29). 15. *Who doth sanctify you:* the Sabbath "*sign*" then is far grander than the rainbow (*Ge.* ix. 12, 13). *Therefore—unto you.* Before you this "*pearl*" is cast: to trample it under foot is to "*rend*"—*whom?* (*Mk.* ii. 27, 28). 14. A strong case of *Obsta principiis*: see note on *the severity of God*, under xii. 29-36. We saw in the *humane* civil code a terrible severity against dishonouring a parent. Here we see the terrible severity against profaning Jehovah's day. The two provincial moral laws for earth and time are enshrined in the heart of the Decalogue, which is the heart of the heart's heart of God's new Covenant with men. They are the twin pillars, Jachin and Boaz, of a Christian society. Individuals can often trace the beginning of ruin in their life's career to a dishonouring of parents or of the holy day. And the terrible severity of prescription in the two cases, through which God made a stand, as at a decisive point, in the very beginning of the history of His visible kingdom on earth, may, through purification of human life at the fountain, have been an incalculable blessing to mankind. 16. *Covenant (bêrith):* not simply statute (note on *Covenant*, *Introd.* pp. 70-72). *Refreshed:* lit. as if drawing breath. This remarkable expression, with its reference to complacent delight in the original finished work of creation (*Ge.* ii. 2, 3, see note on *Fourth Comm.* in xx.), is in keeping with the whole tenor of scriptural allusions to God's *feeling* toward the creatures (even "*their beauty*" makes Him "*glad*"). Especially in the new creation, when they "*meet*" Him (under xxv. 22), He finds His chosen "*rest*," which to the Divine Redeemer is as if refreshing (*Is.* liii. 11; *Re.* iii. 20). By duly

- Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath through-  
 17 out their generations, *for a perpetual covenant*. It is a sign  
 between me and the children of Israel for ever: for *in* six  
 days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh  
 day he rested, and was refreshed.
- 18 And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of  
 communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testi-  
 mony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.

“keeping His Sabbath, and reverencing His sanctuary,” His people please Him in the sense of giving this pleasure to the heart of God (see under “sweet savour” in xxix. 18). *Communing*: lit. talking, cp. Mk. ix. 15; so that the *Transfiguration* was not the first occasion of Moses “talking with” the Son of God,—see note on the *Exodus Angelophany*, under xiv. 19. 18. *The Tables*, according to promise (xxiv. 12) at the beginning of the forty days. On the value of the Tables as evidence of supernatural revelation, see Introd. p. 90. Keil and Delitzsch (*Comm.*) have a good note,—that the slabs cannot (as is often said) have been as broad and as long as the ark, seeing that (xxxii. 15) Moses carried them down the mount “in his hand” (“in his two hands,” De. ix. 15, 17); and that the 173 words of the Exodus edition of the Decalogue could be distinctly written on much smaller slabs. As to the way and manner in which the actual writing may have been done, speculation is incompetent as well as unseemly, and consequently is indulged in by some. But in (the Heb. of) xxxiv. 1 there is a Scripture fact that, while this pair of Tables is of *stone* (sing.), the second pair (made by Moses) was to be (plur.) of *stones*: and it is reasonably supposed that this distinction may represent some real difference. (*Exercise: What may it represent?*)

2nd, **The Apostasy exposed and punished** (xxxii.). Calf or ox worship was no doubt familiar to Israel in Egypt; where, later, Jeroboam (1 Ki. xii. 2) learned to teach Israel to sin. The ox was a rival to Pharaoh, the man-god in sacredness; and (see Introd. p. 54) the chosen people had sunk deep into “the pollutions” (2 Pe. ii. 20). The immediate occasion of this lapse was (initial note to xxx.—xxxiv.) the impression that Moses, who had disappeared in the cloud, was finally gone from them. The true inward cause was (He. iii. 12), “an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.” It is a question here what they meant: whether to worship a false god; or to worship Jehovah in the Egyptian manner, not in the Mosaic manner (now proved a failure). No one knows—perhaps they did not know. The word “gods” in our version is for *Elohim*, which (under i. 17) is the ordinary word for “God.” And it is **Jehovah** (“the Lord”) that Aaron bade them see in the calf. The practical question is not, which of the two Commandments—the first or the second—they *intended* to break; whether it was by stabbing or by poison that they murdered. It is rather, which of all the Commandments they did *not* break? God made idolatry in every way to be alike rejection of *Him*. It was rejection of Him in His *authority*, prescribing the manner of His worship; and in His majestic *spirituality*, of infinite greatness, as the appropriate object of rational worship (Is. xl. 18–25; Act. xvii. 24–29). They broke all the Commandments in so breaking with the Commander, becoming “conformed to this world.” *This* is what was waiting to meet the messenger, now on his way down with those Commandments from God.

CHAP. XXXII. I. And when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. And Aaron said unto them, Break off the golden ear-rings, which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* unto me. And all the people brake off the golden ear-rings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron. And he received *them* at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And when Aaron saw *it*, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, To-morrow is a feast to the Lord. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt-offerings, and brought peace-offerings: and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for

1. *The people's crime* (1-6). *And when*, etc. Change of scene from that deep seclusion of Moses! *Gods—this Moses*: see initial note here. 2, 3. Aaron's device here was doubly poor and weak—(1) intellectually, in calculating only on what cold-blooded carnality is capable of sacrificing; (2) morally, in not downright refusing to do what he knew to be wrong, betraying trust as (xxiv.) left in charge—deputy of absent Moses. 4. *Fashioned—graving—molten* (under ver. 20). The idol was probably of wood within (Is. xlix. 9-16—as to which South has, “making a god out of one end of a stick, and cooking his victuals with the other”). To overlay this (xxv. 31, note) the gold was prepared by—(1) being melted, and cast as a plate; and (2) being laid over the wooden block, and beaten and carved according to the design. *Graving tool* may here be one taken for everything of that sort; as when “the sword” means *war*. *These are thy gods*: or, *This is thy god*;—see initial note here. Everything proceeds *as if* they had meant to worship the true God; only, in the manner of the false Jeroboam (1 Ki. xii. 28). But *to play*, in connexion with idolatrous worship, had a foul significance (1 Co. x. 6-8), illustrated by the Egyptian monuments, and by the phrase, which *here* comes into use (xxxiv. 15), “to go a whoring” in religion.

2. *The mediator's trial* (7-14). This bears obvious resemblance to the temptation of Christ (Mat. iv. 1, etc.). The Lord's “repenting” is anthropomorphism; but not therefore meaningless or unreal. He “is not a man that He should repent;” but He does repent (Ge. vi. 6; Ps. xc. 13). He repents divinely: not abandoning a purpose; but—(1) changing His manner of action, (2) being grieved by sin of creatures, (3) mourning over the ruinous misery of sinners (Lu. xix. 41-44). Here the speciality is, the trial to which He subjects the mediator (cp. Ge. xxii. 1, case of Job; on tempting, see in note *on Induration*, under iv. 18-31). This trial, too, came at the close of forty days' seclusion (presumably, of fasting, cp. xxxiv. 28) in the case of Moses as in

thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt,  
 8 have corrupted *themselves*: they have turned aside quickly  
 out of the way which I commanded them: they have made  
 them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacri-  
 ficed thereunto, and said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which  
 9 have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the  
 Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold,  
 10 it *is* a stiff-necked people: now therefore let me alone, that  
 my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume  
 11 them; and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moses  
 besought the Lord his God, and said, Lord, why doth thy  
 wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought  
 forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a  
 12 mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and  
 say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the  
 mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth?  
 Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy  
 13 people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants,

that of Christ. So as to the offer of a *personal* dominion and glory (had any such thought flitted over Moses' own mind?), there is no need of imagining irony in the speech of God. The people *do* belong to Moses (mediatorially); so that their lot is dependent on his choice. How an offer could be made by a holy God, which it would be disloyal for Moses the mediator to accept, we cannot comprehend; nor can we comprehend how the Almighty *permits* temptation by Satan or by man. We will not inquire beyond *our* "depth" (Ro. xi. 33), remembering what happened to "the Egyptians essaying to do so." (*Exercise as above: What became of the posterity of Moses?—Zipporah?—under the reason annexed to Second Commandment?*) *Behold—people: obstinacy* is weak for the right (mulish, Ps. xxxii. 9), not having the rational strength, which can turn: it rushes blindly against a stone wall, and calls itself, "firmness." *Behold*: see that! (bad raw material for "a great nation"). The alternative: a nation of ("true breed") *Mosaic* type. That must have been attractive to him, who is another name for "the law" (cp. Re. xv. 3, 4). But here is the hinge, THAT SINFUL ISRAEL is to be the great nation. *Let—consume them*; let "law" be magnified, through justice taking its course, and spending its force. *He*, too, thus is "sifted as wheat" (Lu. xxii. 31). But his loyalty survives the test. 11-14. It has now been shown by the test, that the mediator will have nothing merely for himself; nor any greatness of nationality but for that people, of which he is the "surety" (He. vii. 22). And so (1 Jn. ii. 2) if they have sinned against God in him, in him they have an advocate with the Father. So, when the temptation goes on to counter-advocacy (*diabole*) he waxes bold in intercession (Jeanie Deans exhorted the duke not to be "daunted" before the queen when pleading for Effie's life). The Mosaic "boldness" (in He. iv. 16, x. 19, the word *parrhēsia* is *lit.* "free speech") is not for himself, but for that sinful people (to Erskine—"What inspired you so?" in a wonderful pleading. He—"I felt my wife and children tugging at my gown). Christ



- to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit *it* for ever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.
- 14 And Moses turned, and went down from the mount, and the two tables of the testimony *were* in his hand: the tables *were* written on both their sides; on the one side and on the other *were* they written. And the tables *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God, graven upon the tables. And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said unto Moses, *There is* a noise of war in the camp. And he said, *It is* not the voice of *them that* shout for mastery, neither *is it* the voice of *them that* cry for being overcome; *but* the noise of *them that* sing do I hear.
- 15 And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt *it* in the fire, and ground *it* to powder, and strawed *it* upon the water, and made the children

says: "Because I live, ye shall live also." His ground of argument is, what *God* is (His honour), and has said and done (His faithfulness)—(1) choosing *this people*, (2) patronizing *them* before the world, (3) having *them* in His (Abrahamic) covenant. Man (grudging) hates the *argumentum ad hominem*: the *argumentum ad Deum* is what God especially loves (Ro. viii. 26, 27).

3. *The exposure and punishment* (15-26). The tables (under xxxi. 18). Moses *turning* in the sublimity of self-sacrifice:—no wonder if his face shine (cp. Jn. x. 15; He. ii. 2). And here "the testimony"—Moral Law—is surely at its culmination,—excepting in *that ark* (Ps. xl. 8) which (He. x. 1-5) is its true eternal home. It is the *excalibur* that now flashes out in the dark storm of crisis: the "two-edged sword" is living, powerful, while it is shining steel, burning where it shines. This mediator is "not of one:" he is *true to God* as well as to the people; and now, what has to be asserted by the true is the *holiness* of God. Characteristically, the warrior hears war: the shepherd hears wolves. Moses already divines what is passing. The dialogue may be behind the Sûsafeh promontory; or elsewhere concealed from view of the camp, while within the sound of its revelry. (Is *that* the consecration of Israel's life that was to be seen by the seven shining eyes? initial note to xxv. 23-28.) 19. On the mediator's wrath, see Ps. ii. 12. But human infirmity (cp. ii. 12) seems to have a part here. 20. The utter demolition is somehow practicable (see under ver. 4); but *how* the gold could be made into a sort of floating powder we do not know (Egyptian chemistry?). What precisely was meant beyond utter disgrace to the idol, putting his worshippers to shame, appears an insipid question, though



- 21 of Israel drink *of it*. And Moses said unto Aaron, What did  
 22 this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin  
 upon them? And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord  
 wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they *are set* on  
 23 mischief. For they said unto me, Make us gods, which shall  
 go before us: for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us  
 up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of  
 24 him. And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let  
 them break *it* off. So they gave *it* me: then I cast it into  
 the fire, and there came out this calf.
- 25 And when Moses saw that the people *were* naked, (for  
 Aaron had made them naked unto *their* shame among their  
 26 enemies,) then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and  
 said, Who *is* on the Lord's side? *let him come* unto me. And  
 all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.
- 27 And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel,  
 Put every man his sword by his side, *and* go in and out from  
 gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his  
 brother, and every man his companion, and every man his  
 28 neighbour. And the children of Levi did according to the  
 word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about

some have laboured at it. 21-24. Aaron is pitiable now in his cringing falsehood, making an excuse out of the poor souls he has ruined by his base compliance. Moses apparently is silent now in a noble scorn; but when the history comes to be written, the traitor will be clearly shown as liar, the infamy in every feature of it will be pictured for mankind: otherwise, Aaron shall not see the land of promise. 25. False religious excitement runs toward indecency: stirring up the feelings of man while abandoning fear of God. Indecency in connexion with religion is peculiarly *scandalous*. *Enemies*: were the Amalekites watching (from a safe distance)? In any case, the honour of the religion, the "glory" of Jehovah, is in question. To this (ver. 12) the mediator is keenly sensitive on God's behalf (Mat. xxi. 13). It was at *this* point that indignation flamed out in wrath. 26-28. The reappearance of Moses, and his appeal to them, appears to have brought them to their senses. They were subdued, so that eleven tribes passively bore punishment from one. "Thus *conscience* doth make cowards of us all." But (cp. Re. xvi. 9-11) they at first, though subdued in sort of stupor, "repented not to give God the glory." There was a "solidarity" of passive resistance, individuals adhering to their tribes. Levi here showed the perfervidism which, tragical in the first father of the tribe, is capable of being turned into greatness. Pewter is pewter everywhere; but the steel sword of an enemy will be steel in a friend's hand; and a strong fiery temper is a valiant manhood, which may work in a "zeal" of the Lord's House (oratorical Aaron is perhaps in the fever-chill). The seeming indiscriminateness of the slaughter may mean, where all alike are guilty, "decimation" as by lot; or perhaps there were some who "stood out," contumacious in mutineering,

29 three thousand men. For Moses had said, Consecrate yourselves to-day to the Lord, even every man upon his son, and upon his brother; that he may bestow upon you a blessing this day.

30 And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for  
31 your sin. And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh! this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them  
32 gods of gold! Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast  
33 written. And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath  
34 sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. There-

though not actively resisting "Moses in the law." It was terrible, and was meant to be so *in terrorem* for all time; as it now is operative in He. x. 28, 29 and xii. 25-29. 29. The meaning, which is not clear, seems to be—"So be it ever" (*macte virtute*): be ever of the temper which sacrifices private personal affection toward men for the public cause of God (Lu. xiv. 26); so the terrible exhortation, ver. 27.

4. *The mediatorial deprecation* (30-35). God wears an aspect of severity, which is softened by the Mosaic intercession. There is a corresponding reality (Ja. v. 16), of a righteous man's prayer availing much, efficaciously for such good as restoration of a brother's health. But Moses here is mediator, and he is to proceed on the way of *atonement*. Where we see that in God there is a reality—(1) of judicial resentment of sin as moral culpability, and (2) of placability, which is reached in this particular way, provided by His own redeeming love in sovereign grace,—the way of intercession on the ground of the oblation of bleeding sacrifice (see on *Kappōreth* under xxv. 17, and *atonement* under xxix. 30). But here what we see is, not the act of obtaining the propitiation through sacrifice, but the application of redemption in the continuous efficacy of the atoning blood. Gods: or, a god, as above (*N.B.* they made *only one* calf). Moses here reaches a transcendentalism of self-sacrifice, which officially (*we* know) is folded in the heart of the true mediation (Jn. x. 15; He. x. 1-5); but which on the part of Moses, as of Paul (Ro. ix. 3), represents a reality of personal feeling. *Their* love, like that of Christ, may "pass" our knowledge. They could not be willing to be *spiritually* dead—devils incarnate: nor, we may suppose, to be "accused" as He was, who (Ga. iii. 13) hath redeemed us from the curse of the law. *To be blotted out of God's book* is, to have one's name deleted from the roll of citizens of His kingdom, or members of His family (Ps. lxix. 28; Re. xxii. 19). That would be the visible effect of a man's being made *chērēm anathēma* (Ga. i. 8). And presumably the two heroes were thinking only of that effect on their personal happiness, of being externally excluded from enjoyment of that which was their soul's life; if only that should save the people of God. There is something of this temper in all the true children of the kingdom (1 Jn. iii. 16); and there has to be (Ro. viii. 29). But, 33, in the present case *that* way of saving the people is not open. *The sinners* now have to bear the consequence of their own sin; as (ver. 24) will appear by and by in

fore now go, lead the people unto *the place* of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon  
35 them. And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf which Aaron made.

CHAP. XXXIII. 1. And the Lord said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I swear unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed  
2 will I give it: and I will send an Angel before thee; and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite,  
3 and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; unto a land flowing with milk and honey: for I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou *art* a stiff-necked people; lest I consume thee in the way.

4 And when the people heard these evil tidings they mourned;  
5 and no man did put on him his ornaments. For the Lord had said unto Moses, Say unto the children of Israel, Ye *are* a stiff-necked people; I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee: therefore now put off thy ornaments from thee, that I may know what to do unto thee.

white bones that strew the wilderness. Nevertheless, 34, this intercession really availeth much: it comes to be their salvation. As to *the Angel*, see under xiv. 19, xxiii. 23, and xxxiii. 2. 35. *Plagued—calf*: Egyptian punishment of Egyptian sins: though Aaron was leader in the sin, they did it.

3rd, **The intercession in its climax** (xxxiii.), see the agony of intercession in xvii. note. Priestly action, alike of oblation and of intercession, is (*pros ton Theon*) "toward God" (He. v. i.). But (He. v. 2) the High Priest ought to be one who can have a fellow-feeling toward men,—have compassion upon the ignorant, and them that are out of the way. The Mosaic mediation has in it the more comprehensive character of intervention, in such ways as would become a patriotic chief of a people, who has the privilege of approaching an imperial throne on their behalf (*paraclētos*, 1 Jn. ii. 2 = "patron"). And for the purpose of his intervention, he deals with men as well as God.

1. **Manward action** (I-11). Here is what may be described as the first secession ("the Original Secession"), the seceder being Moses on behalf of God. 1-3. Moses alone **excommunicates** the nation, "I banish you"—*Coriolanus*. He is prepared for that strong step by being spoken to as if he were Israel, and in that capacity assured that, God being now about to withdraw from that people, while sending His angel with them, it is best for them that it should be so, since His presence might be their death (on the Angel, see note on *Angelophany* under xiv. 19, xxiii. 23, xxxii. 34). 4-6. Here is the first act of public national humiliation. The *Horeb* here may be one particular peak as a point of departure. But the point of departure may be that central "mountain" generally (iii. 12) where they have met God. It is *there* that, at his bidding, they cast off their ornaments

6 And the children of Israel stripped themselves of their orna-  
 7 ments by the Mount Horeb. And Moses took the tabernacle,  
 and pitched it without the camp, afar off from the camp, and  
 called it The Tabernacle of the Congregation. And it came  
 to pass, *that* every one which sought the Lord went out unto  
 the tabernacle of the congregation, which *was* without the  
 8 camp. And it came to pass, when Moses went out unto the  
 tabernacle, *that* all the people rose up, and stood every man  
*at* his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he was gone  
 9 into the tabernacle. And it came to pass, as Moses entered  
 into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood *at*  
 the door of the tabernacle, and *the LORD* talked with Moses.  
 10 And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand *at* the taber-  
 nacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every  
 11 man *in* his tent door. And the Lord spake unto Moses face

in open profession of sorrow; like orphans, widows, or children of the bride-chamber in absence of the bridegroom. The *sign* of penitence operates like the blood of the Passover lamb. 7-10. *The tent*: some have imagined an ancient sacred tent. There is no warrant for that, and no need of it. "*The tent*" is simply an idiom (xviii. 7, note) for *his* tent. It would be Moses' own, or otherwise the best in the camp, for so wonderful a guest. But the *Tent* was not to bring sacredness; *God* was the sacredness (Ex. iii. 5). What we see is, for the time, a judicial abandonment of Israel, their exclusion from fellowship with God. This they are made to feel the more deeply through *seeing that fellowship* they have lost: like Pilgrim in the shade, wistfully gazing at those who are sunning themselves on the Delectable Mountains. The view is strangely pathetic. When they see him go and come, they venture on no familiarity with him, but give a most impressive mute sign of submissive affectionate respect. And their simple action when they lose sight of him, and know that he is with God, is simply sublime. The description appears to be not only of one act, but of a typical action,—that is, **the course of things** in that mournful period of secession. Perhaps R. V. has misplaced the indication of this at ver. 7, where they have "*Moses used to.*" This is not translation but explanation. And the explanation may come better in where the historian has an opening for it. Ver. 8 (after the tent is fairly located), *And it came to pass* (which itself all but says, "*it was thus that matters proceeded*"). *The pillar descended*: from Sinai peak, taking the place of the (future) tent-door curtain. *N.B.*—*This is the first actual tent* that had the name "*tent of meeting*" (ver. 7). R. V. mangles the whole passage by having *tabernacle* in place of *tent*. Of the *tabernacle* (note on words, under xxv. 7) there was not then a "*pin*" in existence. At ver. 9 *the Lord*, in A. V. and R. V., is not in the Heb. In rigour it is *the pillar* that speaks. But (xix. 9) we know it is the Lord that spoke from the cloud. 11. *Face to face*: the elders had a "*prelibation*" of this when they were nobles (xxiv. 9-11); and Abraham, the "*friend*" of God, had a basis of personal qualification (Ps. xxv. 5; Ge. xx. 7) for intervention on a man's behalf. But Moses (De. xxxiv. 10) is here represented as the **great original prophet**, the one who first received the revelation for Israel. *He*

to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

- 12 And Moses said unto the Lord, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by  
13 name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight. Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, show me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight; and consider that this nation *is* thy people.  
14 And he said, My presence shall go *with thee*, and I will give  
15 thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go not *with*  
16 *me*, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight?

*turned*: he did not reside in that tent, but visited the king there; otherwise attending to his business as chief in the camp. There was left there a trusty guard; Joshua, always stainless, the only man who had not worshipped the idol, then "a young man" (as it might appear to an aged historian), forty-seven, his life's high prime,—a stalwart warrior (after whom was named, "The Hero's Well").

2. Action "toward God" (*pros ton Theon*) (12-23). This is the true inward process of the people's life: what they saw was only an outward indication of that process. 12, 13. It is on behalf of them that Moses acts, but the thing he seeks is immediately to himself: we suppose some assurance of profounder insight that may establish him immovably amid such storms. So the disciples, "Lord, increase our faith;" and when they were shaken by being plainly told of His approaching death, they obtained (2 Pe. i. 16-18) the reassuring view of His transfiguration, "glory that should follow." Moses is exercised about circumstances that are disquieting, particularly, *What about that Angel*, whose promised presence appeared to be a threatened absence of the Lord (see note on *Angelophany*, under xiv. 19, etc.)? In this mind he again plies the *argumentum ad Deum*, pleading what God Himself has already said and done in relation to this people. (1) Calling their mediator *by name* (Ex. iii. 4, cp. xxxi. 2, note); (2) making the nation to be distinctively *His own* people (Ex. xix. 6, note); and in this way (3) making their *visible distinctness*, their being manifestly "separated" from other peoples, to be a matter affecting God's own glory, of self-manifestation as the true God on the earth. *Show me now Thy way* thus means, Give me distinct assurance that Thou art in Sovereign Providence proceeding through the darkly stormy time to that predestined end of this people's rest (in Canaan). 14-17. The dialogue following turns upon that request. The *presence* here is not simply the omnipresence of the Supreme Being, but the manifested favouring power of Israel's redeeming, living, loving God. *Rest*: the *ultimatum* is that for which Israel was trained in Egypt (He. iv. 8); for which men are educated by "Moses in the law" (Ga. iii. 24; Ro. v. 20), and which has come from heaven to seek us in the heart of Christ (Mat. xi. 28, 29). The "presence," for that end is indispensable. And *the people* are to have it as well as Moses (so that perhaps



*is it* not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated,  
 I and thy people, from all the people that *are* upon the face  
 17 of the earth. And the Lord said unto Moses, I will do this  
 thing also that thou hast spoken; for thou hast found grace  
 18 in my sight, and I know thee by name. And he said, I  
 19 beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make  
 all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the  
 name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom  
 I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show  
 20 mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there  
 21 shall no man see me, and live. And the Lord said, Behold,  
*there is* a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock:  
 22 and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I  
 will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with  
 23 my hand while I pass by: and I will take away mine hand,  
 and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be  
 seen.

the presence of the angel may be a real presence of the Lord). 18. But still this much tried man seeks to have some clearer view, some stronger hold. And he is bold in his petitioning, and pertinacious, for it concerns the people's life. What he further asks is further promised. 19-23. But what *is* this thing now further promised? Plainly it is something *mysterious*: so that here we must beware of seeking to be wise beyond what is written. But we may venture to suggest—(1) It is not a mere view of the *essence* of Deity: Moses is not a morbid metaphysician, but a man. (2) It is distinctively a glory *of grace*; for the glory of nature in God has been fully manifested already to Moses and others on this mount. (3) It is a *kind* of view of that glory of grace which perhaps no creature has received before, and no creature shall afterwards receive, until (Lu. ix. 30, 31) Moses and Elias appear in glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, and converse with Jesus about His *exodus*—"decease."

**Renewal of the Covenant** (xxxiv.). There here begins repetition which, largely pervading the history henceforward, will reduce the call for comment far toward nothing. The address to the people, which here is part of the process of restoring them, penitent, into full covenant fellowship, is in substance a repetition of the original address which was appended to the civil laws of the Book of the Covenant, and thus is important as showing what, in the wise estimation of God, were the main matters to be attended to in their general course of life by a people which was furnished with moral law and civil laws from heaven. What is most remarkable in the narrative is the manifestation of God's glory. It was in a real sense unprecedented, though we may not be able to determine with warrantable confidence what precisely was the specific difference between it and some previous manifestations. It especially was distinct from the manifestation of God's glory of law; so that the law on this occasion is in the background, and what shines out on the foreground is the glory of redeeming grace. But how the present manifestation of that glory of grace differs from other manifestations of that same glory, we may have difficulty in precisely perceiving. However, the study of the narrative brings us into the very heart of that which alone can make

CHAP. XXXIV. 1. And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first; and I will write upon *these* tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou  
 2 brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto Mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me  
 3 in the top of the mount. And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount.  
 4 And he hewed two tables of stone, like unto the first: and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand  
 5 the two tables of stone. And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name  
 6 of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious,  
 7 long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and

a heaven upon earth; and Moses himself obtained, not a front view, but a sort of side view, such as one may obtain of the glory of the sun, without looking directly at that luminary, which might "blind" him "with excess of light."

1. *Manifestation of the glory of the Lord* (1-9). In 2 Co. iii. Paul elaborately contrasts the glory of the Lord with a certain glory of law, which appeared in the veil on Moses' face. But Moses was thus as a veiled Christ. Or at least the now unveiled glory of the Lord is that which was reflected on the shining face of Moses; so that it must have been that which on this great occasion was manifested to him on the mount. 1-3. The circumstance of the Tables now being made of more than one stone may have no special significance. Moses being employed to hew them may be intended for an honour to him as fellow-worker with God. It may appear that he, or his labourers, toiled at them through the night; so that this "joy" that "came in the morning" was not unlooked for. *Sinai* here is manifestly a particular peak of meeting (under xxxiii. 6). The prohibition here is the same as in xix. 12, 13, only more strict,—even Joshua is not admitted, perhaps on account of the more peculiar nature of the manifestation that is now to be granted to Moses alone individually. 4. The repetition of the detail as to the Tables, *like unto the first*, shows the importance of the detail once prescribed by God (xxv. 9). A suggestion that the ten words (ver. 28) written on the Tables were, not the Ten Commandments, but something else, never occurred to any one who sought his information simply in the history. 5. *Descended*: here, too, the king came to the door! (cp. xxxiii. 9). *Stood* (see xxiv. 10, and note on the *Kapporeth*, under xxv. 17). Proclaimed THE NAME OF THE LORD. This was the great event. It carries us back to the original meeting in Ex. iii. iv. But now the Speaker, by His actual work of redemption, has *proved His title to the name*. And this NAME contains in itself the whole glorious fulness of divine redeeming grace. The words here (6, 7) were described by Luther as "the

sin, and that will by no means clear *the guilty*; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth *generation*. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward 9 the earth, and worshipped. And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; (for it *is* a stiff-necked people,) and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.

sermon on the name." It is to be observed that the wonderful manifestation distinctively to Moses is passed over (cp. 2 Co. xii. 1-10) with a vague intimation of the fact. What is distinctly given to us is that "sermon on the name" which is common to all believers with Moses. What God says about Himself here is not simply that He is "Love," or Love and Light. What He says is that He is sovereign in redeeming love (cp. xiv. 8). The varied expression of "the unsearchable riches" of grace here is like an ocean: to dwell upon the separate words is like watching particular waves—that is, to lose sight of the sea. What here is meant is *infinite*, all-sufficient fulness. And we remember *who* is immediately referred to. It is (1 Ti. i. 15) the very "chief of sinners"—Israel, so shamefully apostate in so short a time after such a wondrous experience of the mercies of God. The expressions about the vindicatory justice of God are profoundly reassuring. The conscience will not rest if justice be not satisfied. The heart will find no heaven in a love that is not holy. The reason can in reality never believe in a God that is not true. But here the God who is infinite in the freedom and fulness of His forgiving love is unchangeably true, and holy, and just; so that the song of salvation is a "song of Moses, the servant of God" (Re. xv. 3, 4), as well as "of the Lamb." *That will not clear the guilty* is in the Heb. simply *that will not clear* (lit. "no clearer"), which here perhaps is better in its abruptness than our more rounded phrase: it is the *righteousness* of God that rises thus, like the perpendicular face of the cliff, on that "mount which might be touched." The reference to sin's consequences extending through generations deepens the salutary impression of the truth that this Redeemer, so wondrously full and free in His mercy, is that same awful Being whose holy providence we see in those tragedies of domestic history. *Moral*: let us then be assured that He is "a just God" while "a Saviour." 8. *Haste*: a movement like that of the people (xxxiii. 8) in reverence to Moses; but with a sudden overmastering sense of the majesty of the Being who has thus revealed Himself. 9. The mediator (He. vii. 25) still holds on to his intercession for the people. They have sore need of such a God among them: witness their disgraceful fall. Though they do not deserve it, they are penitent here in their mourning garb. And now in his holy "boldness," the mediator has a new *argumentum ad Deum*: He speaks of the people as being God's *inheritance*. This is the first appearance of that expression, which has a place of so much interest in the completed revelation. Not only the Lord is "the lot of the inheritance" of His people; they are the lot of His inheritance; as now is declared by Moses, that "servant of God." They are His, not by nature only, but by will, by purchase, by loved and honoured acquisition under a covenant.

10 And he said, Behold, I make a covenant : before all thy  
 people I will do marvels, such as have not been done in all  
 the earth, nor in any nation : and all the people among which  
 thou *art* shall see the work of the Lord : for it *is* a terrible  
 11 thing that I will do with thee. Observe thou that which I  
 command thee this day : behold, I drive out before thee the  
 Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Hittite, and the Periz-  
 12 zite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite. Take heed to thyself,  
 lest thou make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land  
 whither thou goest, lest it be for a snare in the midst of thee :  
 13 but ye shall destroy their altars, break their images, and cut  
 14 down their groves. For thou shalt worship no other god : for  
 15 the Lord, whose name *is* Jealous, *is* a jealous God. Lest thou  
 make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they  
 go a whoring after their gods, and do sacrifice unto their  
 16 gods, and *one* call thee, and thou eat of his sacrifice ; and  
 thou take of their daughters unto thy sons, and their daughters  
 go a whoring after their gods, and make thy sons go a whoring  
 17 after their gods. Thou shalt make thee no molten gods.  
 18 The feast of unleavened bread shalt thou keep. Seven  
 days thou shalt eat unleavened bread, as I commanded thee,  
 in the time of the month Abib : for in the month Abib thou

2. *The instructions for Israel's future* (11-26). These presuppose the Moral Law, which here is provided for in the Tables of the testimony. And they do not repeat the detailed legislation of the Book of the Covenant (xxi.-xxxiii.). They only go back to that ground of general directions and warnings, regarding the career of Israel in the world, which on the previous occasion of covenanting furnished so very impressive a peroration to the great Sermon from the Mount. Here, as before, the two great matters of warning and of direction to the nation seeking to be blessed of God, are what regards the heathen world around them, and what regards their own observance of the religious ordinances which God has given them (cp. xxiii. 16-31). 10-17. Relatively to the outside populations we observe now that in their sight God is to work *miracles*, distinctly with a view to the subduing *terror* of those wonders which was seen and felt in Egypt. *Groves*, mentioned here, are supposed to have really consisted in some sort of statuary, perhaps of stone, probably of wood ; in some way connected with (lascivious) worship of Astarté (*Asherôth*, plur. of *Asherah*, is the word for *groves*). An *asherah* may have served as a sort of heathenish Maypole (cp. the French "tree of liberty"). The introduction here and now, along with the expression about a *jealous* God, of "go a whoring," in prohibition of such practices, may be historically connected with impure indecencies at the recent calf-worship ; but it had a similar appropriateness in connexion with idolatrous worship very generally. *Molten* gods, a peculiar expression, is accounted for in like manner by connexion with the calf-worship. 18-21. In the direction as to ordinances,

19 camest out from Egypt. All that openeth the matrix *is*  
mine; and every firstling among thy cattle, *whether* ox or  
20 sheep, *that is male*. But the firstling of an ass thou shalt  
redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem *him* not, then shalt  
thou break his neck. All the first-born of thy sons thou  
shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty.

21 Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt  
rest: in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.

22 And thou shalt observe the feast of weeks, of the first-fruits  
of wheat harvest, and the feast of ingathering at the year's  
end.

23 Thrice in the year shall all your men-children appear before  
24 the Lord God, the God of Israel. For I will cast out the  
nations before thee, and enlarge thy borders; neither shall  
any man desire thy land, when thou shalt go up to appear  
25 before the Lord thy God thrice in the year. Thou shalt not  
offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the  
sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.

26 The first of the first-fruits of thy land thou shalt bring unto

*Sabbatism* now, as before, has a great place. The weekly Sabbath (see note on *Fourth Comm.*, xx.) is not founded on the Decalogue, but is treated as a specifically national institution. And it is to be here observed that the holy nation are expressly warned against the temptation of an agricultural people, to tamper with the Lord's Day on account of urgencies of seed-time and reaping-time (*earing* is Old English for ploughing; from the same root as the Latin *ar-are*). It is noted by Dr. Rawlinson (*Comm.*) that in Palestine and neighbouring lands the sowing time is peculiarly tempting; because the season depends on rainfall, which is precarious, so that the year may be lost if the sowing be not "in the nick of time." In other lands the peril may be from floods or winds at the reaping time. The rule for all cases is, keep the Sabbath; and leave the issue to the Lord of the Sabbath, who is the Creator and Ruler of the world. The case is different when an ox or an ass is fallen into a pit: a sentient creature is in pain and in peril of death. Here it is only the farmer who is in peril of losing some money. Let him not insure himself against God's providence by robbing Him of His day. These simple lessons can easily be applied to other cases by those who really wish to serve God. Those who worship mammon, as a rain-god or Jupiter Pluvius, can easily get theologians to provide them with reasons for doing their own pleasure on the holy day. 22, 23. Note that in ver. 22 only two festivals really are intended,—“the feast of weeks, of the first-fruits,” means “the feast of weeks, that is to say, the feast of the first-fruits.” The *thrice* of ver. 23, is made up by the Passover (see xxiii. 15–17). In ver. 24 there is a distinct “special providence” of the Ruler of the world to guard His people from suffering in consequence of their obedience to His law. It is remarkable that the guardianship was to take the form of a sort of fear of the true God in the hearts of heathens. That fear appears to have remained long in



the house of the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not see the a kid  
 27 in his mother's milk. And the Lord said unto Moses, Write  
 thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have  
 28 made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was  
 there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did  
 neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the  
 tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.  
 29 And it came to pass, when Moses came down from Mount  
 Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when  
 he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the  
 30 skin of his face shone while he talked with him. And when  
 Aaron and all the children of Israel saw Moses, behold, the  
 skin of his face shone: and they were afraid to come nigh  
 31 him. And Moses called unto them; and Aaron and all the  
 rulers of the congregation returned unto him; and Moses  
 32 talked with them. And afterward all the children of Israel  
 came nigh: and he gave them in commandment all that the

strength. At the very close of the period of the Judges, when Israel was about to pass from the condition of dependence on such neighbours, the desperate valour of the Philistines (1 Sa. iv.), which cost Israel so dear, was inspired by a peculiar operation of that fear. Those who honour the Creator in His law may safely trust in His Providence. The Vicar of Wakefield observed that the clever knave Jenkinson was often in prison and other distresses, while simple, honest farmer Flamborough, whom he was continually cheating, went on prospering and to prosper (cp. xvi. 18). *See the a kid* (note under xxiii. 19). The repetition of this precept is suggestive. (*Exercise*: Essay on this precept.)

The finale (27-35). This conclusion of the whole matter is very wonderful; and wonderfully sublime in its mere simplicity. *These words—Covenant*: here, for a third time, we see Moses in the very act of writing (cp. xvii. 14 and xxiv. 4). On all the three occasions (see Introd. p. 61) the act of writing fell to be mentioned in the history of a solemnity, because it was itself a part of the solemnity (cp. "clerical subscription to a creed"). Here, as in xxiv., the solemnity is, binding Israel expressly and formally, in a written contract, in covenant with God. 28. On this second occasion of going forty days into seclusion with God it is said that Moses *fasted*; and it may perhaps be presumed that he fasted on the first occasion. *The writer of the Ten Words* is shown to have been the Lord by ver. 1. The "words" (in Heb. "words" has the meaning of "matter") which *Moses* has to write are, the matters connected with this renewing of the covenant,—*res gestæ* of the transaction, a record of the proceedings. *Ten Commandments*: Heb. *Ten Words* (initial note to xx.). 29-35. The shining of the face of Moses implies that, in the manifestation to him on the mount, there must have been something specifically different from the previous manifestations of the glory, whether to him or to the elders (xxiv.). But beyond the fact that it was so, what more we are taught about it is, that we must be contented in ignorance:

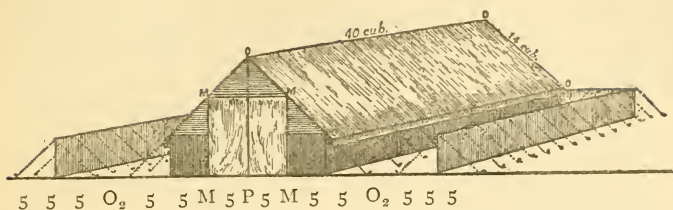
33 Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. And *till* Moses  
 34 had done speaking with them, he put a veil on his face. But  
 when Moses went in before the Lord, to speak with him, he  
 took the veil off, until he came out. And he came out, and  
 spake unto the children of Israel *that* which he was com-  
 35 manded. And the children of Israel saw the face of Moses,  
 that the skin of Moses' face shone: and Moses put the veil  
 upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

“it is a learned ignorance to be willing not to know what the Best of Teachers does not will to tell us.”

*Nescire velle quæ magister optimus  
 Docere non vult, docta inscitia est.*

In ver. 33 our translators have thrown in a *till*. The verse by itself looks as if the face of Moses had been unveiled when he was speaking to man as well as when he was speaking to God. The representation in vers. 34 and 35 make an end of the doubt. In the light of these, 33 is seen to mean,—“And Moses finished what he had to say to them (he had put a veil on his face). And when,” etc. Paul’s reasoning in 2 Co. iii. proceeds on the view that the shining face was painful or terrible to look upon. It may have been unendurable to their bodily eyes. That would serve Paul’s purpose, to illustrate by contrast the winning glory of grace in the gospel. On the other hand we saw the gospel of grace was really the shining face behind the veil. We must not press the apostle’s use of an illustration beyond his own intention in the use of it (he is careless about mixing metaphors, if the mixture help him). In the earlier part of the chapter (2 Co. iii.) he speaks of a glory of law that was *not* concealed, and is now eclipsed, or lost in new light, as the stars disappear in the sunlight. *That* was not concealed by the veil he speaks of later; it *was* this veil. Still, the glory of Moses was only a reflexion (Jn. i. 8, 16). He saw the original, shining on another mount, through the veil of the manhood of Jesus the Son of God. And *that* may really have been completed answer to his petition (in Ex. xxxiii., cp. Ps. xc.).—The “unconscious beauty” of Moses, who “wist not that his face shone,” is a fine starting-point for commonplaces about humility. The speciality in the case of Moses was not his unconsciousness. A hypocrite may be unconscious of the fact that *his* face does *not* shine. The speciality was the beauty (Ps. xc. 14, etc.), the *shining* of the face, as a reflex of the manifestation of Jehovah the Redeemer. Accordingly Paul and other men who use the Scriptures—not to hang their fancies on, but according to the *scriptural* intention, bid us apply the story to illustration of the gospel of redeeming grace—with ruin by nature as presupposed. But Paul found (2 Co. iii. 14, iv. 4) that some are *blind* in the sunlight of that glory. Finally, the manifestation was not simply *in* that mediator. It was *on* him, and *to* him, in order that through him it might come to us,—

When down the mount he trode,  
 All glowing from the presence of his God.



M M M M is door of Mishkan, the Tabernacle, being its whole east front, 10 cubits by 10. O O O O shows one side of the goats' hair tent; excepting a breadth of 5 cubits forming verandah in front of door of Mishkan.

OF THE ERECTION (Chaps. xxxv.-xl.). At the close of this record of the actual doing of the building work, there is a statement (xxxix. 43) regarding Moses looking on the whole, and blessing the workers, which conveys the impression that he must have considered the work as one of very great importance, calling for great care. On his part the labour and strain of mind were called for, not because a new thing vitally affecting the religion of the people, and so the fortunes of the nation, had to be done, where there was one way of going right, which it might be difficult to find, and a thousand ways of going wrong, into any one of which it might be easy to stumble. For he had full power of command over the workers in this matter, and he had an infallible direction from God. The one occasion for patient watchfulness through all the labour was, that every detail had to be done precisely according to the pattern which God had showed him in the mount. As a mere record of such work done, so exactly minute in specification of every stroke, this closing narrative of the erection of the Tabernacle has no parallel among other national histories of mankind. That makes detailed commentary almost needless, because real commentary here could be only repetition of what has been said in commenting on the direction. And this brings distinctly into view what manifestly is the purpose of the history itself—namely, not simply to tell the tale of work done, but to show that, through the whole work, and in every detail of it, everything had been done according to the express direction of God. This is a protestation to all future ages that the Tabernacle religion is not of man; seeing that every particle of the building of the Tabernacle itself was, while done by hands of men, yet a creation by the will of God, “as the Lord commanded Moses.” The exercise to which the reader thus is called is, not study of the detailed character of the work, but *observation of the fact*, that the erection is precisely according to the divine direction. It is a profitable exercise to compare the two together, part for part, and mark their exact correspondence, as when men are appointed for the scrutiny of accounts. But where there is exact coincidence there is no call for comment, but only for

CHAP. XXXV. I. And Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said unto them, These *are* the words which the Lord hath commanded, that *ye* 2 should do them. Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put 3 to death. Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day.

4 And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, This *is* the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord: whosoever *is* of a willing heart, let him bring it, an 5 offering of the Lord; gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, 6 and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' *hair*, and rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood, 7 and oil for the light, and spices for anointing oil, and for the 8 sweet incense, and onyx stones, and stones to be set for the 9 ephod, and for the breastplate. And every wise-hearted 10 among you shall come, and make all that the Lord hath 11 commanded; the tabernacle, his tent, and his covering, his taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his sockets; 12 the ark, and the staves thereof, *with* the mercy-seat, and the

certification, that here everything is done according to the pattern, "as the Lord commanded Moses." *N.B.*—We *owe it to Moses*, to give every detail here, comparing his erection with God's direction.

**Making ready for the work (xxxv.).** 1-3. The priests in their office afterwards profaned the Sabbath and were blameless; for the common work of their office was necessary for the due observance of the day. But there is no such plea of necessity or mercy for doing common work at the building of the Tabernacle. Wherefore, let not men be carried away by the enthusiasm of the work into violation of God's law of holy resting; as if "the better day, the better deed." Instead of thus robbing God, men are to give what is in a sense their own. And so the process of preparation for the building resolves itself into **contribution of the means of building**,—which often cools enthusiasm remarkably. 4-19:—(1) 4, 5. As to *the spirit* of the giving; (2) 6-9. As to *the materials* that are to be thus provided; and (3) 10-19. As to the *various kinds of work* to be done with these materials, calling for "wise heart," giving skilful hand, in the workers. Looking over the particulars under these heads, we observe a few things calling for brief note. In this place—we are glad to see—our translators are again compelled to render *ohel*, not by "Tabernacle," which is misleading mistranslation, but by *tent*. For here (ver. 11) they have to employ words expressive of the distinction between the *mishkan* (Dwelling), which is constituted by the great cloth in its wooden frame, from that *covering* which is constituted by the ram-skin slating of the goats' hair (tent) *ohel*; as the body, which is "the

- 13 vail of the covering; the table, and his staves, and all his  
 14 vessels, and the shewbread; the candlestick also for the light,  
 and his furniture, and his lamps, with the oil for the light;  
 15 and the incense altar, and his staves, and the anointing oil,  
 and the sweet incense, and the hanging for the door at the  
 16 entering in of the tabernacle; the altar of burnt-offering, with  
 his brazen grate, his staves, and all his vessels; the laver and  
 17 his foot; the hangings of the court, his pillars, and their  
 18 sockets, and the hanging for the door of the court; the pins  
 of the tabernacle, and the pins of the court, and their cords;  
 19 the clothes of service, to do service in the holy *place*, the holy  
 garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons,  
 to minister in the priest's office.
- 20 And all the congregation of the children of Israel departed  
 21 from the presence of Moses. And they came, every one  
 whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit  
 made willing, *and* they brought the Lord's offering to the  
 work of the tabernacle of the congregation, and for all his  
 22 service, and for the holy garments. And they came, both  
 men and women, as many as were willing-hearted, *and*  
 brought bracelets, and ear-rings, and rings, and tablets, all  
 jewels of gold: and every man that offered *offered* an offering

earthly house of this tabernacle" of our manhood, may be covered by a great-coat or an umbrella. The Heb. word for *covering* in ver. 12 is different; it is the one applied to the door-curtains in xxvi., xxxvi.,—meaning, not a shelter from weather, but a screen from observation. The following articles now are named in their natural order, according to the respective places they are to have in the fabric; namely, the candlestick (ver. 14), the *altar of incense* (ver. 15), and *the laver and his foot* (ver. 16). The erection narrative is thus not merely made out of the direction, but a *bonâ fide* account of the work taken down as it proceeded. In ver. 18 the *pins*—for fixing cords—are spoken of as partly of *the Tabernacle*; the reference is to the pegs for the goats'-hair tent; so that here we see another case of *denominatio fit a majori*, the proper name of the Dwelling is extended to its belongings, as a man's watch-key is said to be the man's. As to *the actual giving* of their substance (20–29) for the material means of building, we again perceive that wealth was not in the form of paper money, or coined gold or silver; but in that of articles that were valuable either intrinsically, such as the precious metals, or as production of skilled labour, such as yarn and dyed cloth or linen or wool, and fine work of the needle and the loom. (*Exercise* here on "Investment," and having our treasure in heaven.) *Ear-rings and rings*—say, and *signet-rings* (Canon Cook). What were these *tablets* among personal adornments? No one really knows. The very meaning of the Heb. word is lost. Some think that they perhaps were armlets; Gesenius, gold beads. What *we* (of the school of Moses, Ga. iii. 24) know is, that they were valuables which were sacrificed for the House of God. Ver. 23, compared



- 23 of gold unto the Lord. And every man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and red skins of rams, and badgers' skins, brought *them*.
- 24 Every one that did offer an offering of silver and brass, brought the Lord's offering: and every man with whom was found
- 25 shittim wood, for any work of the service, brought *it*. And all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, *both* of blue,
- 26 and of purple, *and* of scarlet, and of fine linen. And all the women whose heart stirred them up in wisdom, spun goats' hair.
- 27 And the rulers brought onyx stones, and stones to be set, for the ephod, and for the breastplate; and spice, and oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet
- 29 incense. The children of Israel brought a willing offering unto the Lord, every man and woman, whose heart made them willing to bring, for all manner of work which the Lord had commanded to be made by the hand of Moses.
- 30 And Moses said unto the children of Israel, See, the Lord

with 25, 26, shows that the material of yarn was dyed before it was spun. We do not see clear proof in this place that the yarn which went into the fine work of embroidering must have been linen (Rawlinson, whose opinion here is worth much more than ours). *With whom—shittim*. They kept valuables about them: not in a Bank safe. The most beautiful piece of woodwork the present writer has seen is a church panelling made out of a piece of kauri timber that had thus been kept as a treasure, until the last owner gifted it for this building. *Whose heart stirred them up* (ver. 26): who moved that fountain? (Jn. iv. 10). *Wisdom* here does not show that goats' hair spinning was a work of high original genius. What it shows is the earnest cordiality of that affection for the Lord's House, which made gifted women to throw themselves into rough common work; as when a college-bred gentleman takes to spade and barrow at the foundation of a church (see Mr. Gillies' note on Ps. lxxxiv. 10). *With whom was found*. Here again (cp. ver. 22) we see that the things did not come, as tares grow, while men slept. "He that seeketh findeth." Sometimes the collector fails to seek; and sometimes the other party. Sometimes the woman professing to seek for a piece of money does not seek diligently till she find it: being near of kin to Ananias and Sapphira. Note that the *rulers* are not "elders;" nor the "nobles" of xxiv.; the word means, men of high standing. Presumably they were Jethro's judges (xviii.). And these, we saw, were to be men "hating covetousness"—far above greed of gold, the raw material of calf ("covetousness, which is idolatry"). *Every man and woman*. The *Confession of Faith* says, the repentance ought to be "for every one of our sins, in particular, particularly." So now, this penitent people bring forth a fruit meet for repentance, not only as a man, but every "family apart . . . and their wives apart."

*The two masters of works* (30-35). Are *their* names always solemnly recorded in the account of great buildings? Moses, "instructed in all the

hath called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur,  
 31 of the tribe of Judah: and he hath filled him with the spirit  
 of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and  
 32 in all manner of workmanship; and to devise curious works,  
 33 to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in the cutting  
 of stones, to set *them*, and in carving of wood, to make any  
 34 manner of cunning work. And he hath put in his heart that  
 he may teach, *both* he, and Aholiab the son of Ahisamach,  
 35 of the tribe of Dan. Them hath he filled with wisdom of  
 heart, to work all manner of work of the engraver, and of  
 the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and  
 in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver,  
*even* of them that do any work, and of those that devise  
 cunning work.

CHAP. XXXVI. I. Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and  
 every wise-hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and  
 understanding to know how to work all manner of work for  
 the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord  
 2 had commanded. And Moses called Bezaleel and Aholiab,  
 and every wise-hearted man, in whose heart the Lord had put  
 wisdom, *even* every one whose heart stirred him up to come  
 3 unto the work to do it: and they received of Moses all the  
 offering which the children of Israel had brought for the work  
 of the service of the sanctuary, to make it *withal*. And they  
 4 brought yet unto him free offerings every morning. And all  
 the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary,  
 came every man from his work which they made;

wisdom of the Egyptians," was not a Jack-of-all-trades, but a thoroughly educated man. "The kingly governing faculty" is shown in the selection of suitable heads of departments. *Engraver*, in ver. 35, would better be craftsman (marg.) with skilled weaver, in place of *cunning workman*. The master craftsman of all was Bezaleel, whom we now see in vers. 32, 33. His speciality was the smith-work. And (xxxvii. 1) the most important part of that was done by himself. Hence, any other master of "engraving" along with him, would be another sun in the firmament. Skilled weaving, in which Aholiab was expert, is a sub-department of craftsmanship, embracing ornamental needlework as well as the finer weaving. We require to employ some general word for the technical skill that goes in common into all such work. "Smith" (from *Schmieden*, "to smite") at one time had that generality of meaning; so a tailor was a "clothes-smith;" whence the frequency of the name in the census. But now we need "craftsmen," in order to keep alive the memory of the fact that Bezaleel was not a common Mr. Smith, but a grand Master Artisan, the Prince—who was a royal priest—of Craftsmanship.

Making of the Dwelling (xxxvi.). See Introd. pp. 83-90, and cp.

- 5 And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which  
6 the Lord commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were  
7 restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.
- 8 And every wise-hearted man, among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle, made ten curtains *of* fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: *with* cherubims of cunning  
9 work made he them. The length of one curtain *was* twenty and eight cubits, and the breadth of one curtain four cubits:  
10 the curtains *were* all of one size. And he coupled the five curtains one unto another; and *the other* five curtains he  
11 coupled one unto another. And he made loops of blue on the edge of one curtain from the selvedge in the coupling; likewise he made in the uttermost side of *another* curtain, in  
12 the coupling of the second. Fifty loops made he in one curtain, and fifty loops made he in the edge of the curtain which *was* in the coupling of the second: the loops held one  
13 *curtain* to another. And he made fifty taches of gold, and coupled the curtains one unto another with the taches: so it became one tabernacle.
- 14 And he made curtains *of* goats' *hair* for the tent over the  
15 tabernacle: eleven curtains he made them. The length of

1 Chron. xxi. 29. 1. *Great enthusiasm* (1-7). (1) 1-3. The skilled able men go into the work with all their heart and soul. (2) 5-7. The means come pouring in upon them so as to make an "embarrassment of riches." Hence, the first recorded case of a strike; and the only case on record in which difficulty arose from excess of liberality toward workmen. This shows, for the "good time coming," what capability there is in brotherhood of man (1 Pe. ii. 17) under covenant of God. The Mosaic proclamation (ver. 6)—"Hold! enough; stop your giving," is thus unprecedented. The wonderful effusion of liberality may be (Zech. xii. 10) a result of the wonderful experience of forgiveness (xxxiv. 6, 7) on the part of this repentant "chief of sinners" (cp. Lu. vii. 47)—in some countries the most copious floods are from the melted snow. 2. *The actual work* (8-38). (1) 8-13. The great cloth which in effect was the Dwelling. Here again is the emphatic *one* (xxvi. 6): that is to say, the two half-tabernacles are to be one, namely, the *mishkan*, dwelling, or tabernacle (*not* "tent"). (2) The goats'-hair tent, 14-19. In ver. 14 our translators are again compelled to be accurate; so that in this verse of theirs a reader sees the tabernacle to be different from the sheltering tent which is over it, as a man is different from his greatcoat or umbrella. At ver. 19 R.V. suggests (in marg.) porpoise skins as an alternative to seal

one curtain *was* thirty cubits, and four cubits *was* the breadth  
16 of one curtain : the eleven curtains *were* of one size. And he  
coupled five curtains by themselves, and six curtains by them-  
17 selves. And he made fifty loops upon the uttermost edge of  
the curtain in the coupling, and fifty loops made he upon the  
18 edge of the curtain which coupleth the second. And he  
made fifty taches *of* brass to couple the tent together, that it  
19 might be one. And he made a covering for the tent *of* rams'  
skins dyed red, and a covering *of* badgers' skins above *that*.

20 And he made boards for the tabernacle *of* shittim wood,  
21 standing up. The length of a board *was* ten cubits, and the  
22 breadth of a board one cubit and a half. One board had two  
tenons, equally distant one from another : thus did he make  
23 for all the boards of the tabernacle. And he made boards for  
the tabernacle : twenty boards for the south side southward.  
24 And forty sockets of silver he made under the twenty boards ;  
two sockets under one board for his two tenons, and two  
25 sockets under another board for his two tenons. And for the  
other side of the tabernacle, *which is* toward the north corner,  
26 he made twenty boards, and their forty sockets of silver : two  
sockets under one board, and two sockets under another  
27 board. And for the sides of the tabernacle westward he  
28 made six boards. And two boards made he for the corners  
29 of the tabernacle in the two sides. And they were coupled  
beneath, and coupled together at the head thereof, to one  
30 ring : thus he did to both of them in both the corners. And  
there were eight boards ; and their sockets *were* sixteen  
sockets of silver, under every board two sockets.

31 And he made bars *of* shittim wood ; five for the boards of  
32 the one side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of  
the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards  
33 of the tabernacle for the sides westward. And he made the  
middle bar to shoot through the boards from the one end to  
34 the other. And he overlaid the boards with gold, and made  
their rings *of* gold *to be* places for the bars, and overlaid the  
bars with gold.

skins. The Arabic *tuchash* (under xxv. 5) determines only the type of marine animals in question ; in combination with the guidance implied in the intended use of this "covering," as a waterproof envelope of Dwelling. Between the claims of two animals of that type, whose skin would (?) alike serve the purpose, no principle of determination is revealed by Moses or the prophets. Is there any help in the Septuagint "*hyacinthine*" skins? Do all those animal skins look bluish? 3. As to meaning of some details:—

35 And he made a vail *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and  
 fine twined linen: *with* cherubims made he it of cunning  
 36 work. And he made thereunto four pillars *of* shittim wood,  
 and overlaid them with gold; their hooks *were of* gold; and  
 he cast for them four sockets of silver.

37 And he made an hanging for the tabernacle door *of* blue,  
 and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, of needle-  
 38 work: and the five pillars of it with their hooks: and he  
 overlaid their chapters and their fillets with gold: but their  
 five sockets *were of* brass.

CHAP. XXXVII. 1. And Bezaleel made the ark *of* shittim wood:  
 two cubits and a half *was* the length of it, and a cubit and a  
 half the breadth of it, and a cubit and a half the height of it.

2 And he overlaid it with pure gold within and without, and  
 3 made a crown of gold to it round about. And he cast for it  
 four rings of gold, *to be set* by the four corners of it; even  
 two rings upon the one side of it, and two rings upon the  
 4 other side of it. And he made staves *of* shittim wood, and  
 5 overlaid them with gold. And he put the staves into the  
 rings by the sides of the ark, to bear the ark.

6 And he made the mercy-seat *of* pure gold: two cubits and  
 a half *was* the length thereof, and one cubit and a half the  
 7 breadth thereof. And he made two cherubims *of* gold,  
 beaten out of one piece made he them, on the two ends of  
 8 the mercy-seat; one cherub on the end on this side, and  
 another cherub on the *other* end on that side: out of the  
 mercy-seat made he the cherubims on the two ends thereof.  
 9 And the cherubims spread out *their* wings on high, and  
 covered with their wings over the mercy-seat, with their faces

*Fillets* (ver. 38) ought to be connecting rods. In ver. 33, *through the boards* (under xxvi. 17, 26) is meaningless. The thing intended is reaching, by means of rings, along the wall of boards, or planks, from end to end. At ver. 27, *side* means back (side). This affects only the current use of English. In ver. 22, *equally distant from one another*, is meaningless or truism (could two things be *unequally* distant from *one another*?). The thing intended is that the pairs of tenons, one for every plank with its pair of sockets, should be counterparts, corresponding each to each; every pair of tenons to its pair of sockets (if not, more vaguely, every pair of tenons to every other pair of tenons, or perhaps to the pair that is right opposite, or to the neighbouring pairs). *N.B.—The Dwelling, with its tent covering, is now completed.*

The furniture of the Dwelling (xxxvii.), for the two compartments and for the Court. 1. *For the Holy of Holies*, name not given here. 1-9. The worker *here* is the *megalander* of craftsmen, Bezaleel himself—the master.



one to another; *even* to the mercy-seat-ward were the faces of the cherubims.

10 And he made the table *of* shittim wood: two cubits *was*  
 11 the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof, and a  
 12 cubit and a half the height thereof. And he overlaid it with  
 13 pure gold, and made thereunto a crown of gold round about.  
 14 Also he made thereunto a border of an handbreadth round  
 15 about; and made a crown of gold for the border thereof  
 16 round about. And he cast for it four rings of gold, and put  
 17 the rings upon the four corners that *were* in the four feet  
 18 thereof. Over against the border were the rings, the places  
 19 for the staves, to bear the table. And he made the staves  
 20 *of* shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold, to bear the  
 21 table. And he made the vessels which *were* upon the table,  
 22 his dishes, and his spoons, and his bowls, and his covers to  
 23 cover withal, *of* pure gold.

17 And he made the candlestick *of* pure gold: *of* beaten work  
 18 made he the candlestick: his shaft, and his branch, his  
 19 bowls, his knops, and his flowers, were of the same: and six  
 20 branches going out of the sides thereof; three branches of the  
 21 candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three branches  
 22 of the candlestick out of the other side thereof: three bowls  
 23 made after the fashion of almonds in one branch, a knop and  
 24 a flower; and three bowls made like almonds in another  
 25 branch, a knop and a flower: so throughout the six branches  
 26 going out of the candlestick. And in the candlestick *were*  
 27 four bowls made like almonds, his knops and his flowers:  
 28 and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop  
 29 under two branches of the same, and a knop under two  
 30 branches of the same, according to the six branches going  
 31 out of it. Their knops and their branches were of the same:  
 32 all of it *was* one beaten work *of* pure gold. And he made  
 33 his seven lamps, and his snuffers, and his snuff-dishes, *of* pure  
 34 gold. *Of* a talent of pure gold made he it, and all the vessels  
 35 thereof.

25 And he made the incense altar *of* shittim wood: the length  
 6-9. *To the mercy-seat-ward*: to the Kapporeth. 2. *For the Holy*: name  
 not given here. As to candlestick, *snuffers* (ver. 23) are *tongs* for trimming  
 the wick, and for depositing the refuse in *snuff-dishes*. Our modern  
 "snuffers," combining the two functions in one organism, are thus an  
 "innovation." The Altar of Incense, too, is here in its natural connexion,  
 not as it was in the direction. In short, *N.B.—Everything is ready for the  
 internal of Dwelling, except the veil.*

of it *was* a cubit, and the breadth of it a cubit, (*it was* four-square,) and two cubits *was* the height of it; the horns  
26 thereof were of the same. And he overlaid it with pure gold, *both* the top of it, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns of it: also he made unto it a crown of gold round  
27 about. And he made two rings of gold for it under the crown thereof, by the two corners of it, upon the two sides  
28 thereof, to be places for the staves to bear it withal. And he made the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlaid them with gold.

29 And he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure incense of sweet spices, according to the work of the apothecary.

CHAP. XXXVIII. 1. And he made the altar of burnt-offering *of* shittim wood: five cubits *was* the length thereof, and five cubits the breadth thereof, (*it was* foursquare,) and three  
2 cubits the height thereof. And he made the horns thereof on the four corners of it; the horns thereof were of the same:  
3 and he overlaid it with brass. And he made all the vessels of the altar, the pots, and the shovels, and the basons, *and* the flesh-hooks, and the fire-pans: all the vessels thereof made  
4 he *of* brass. And he made for the altar a brazen grate of *net*-work, under the compass thereof, beneath unto the midst  
5 of it. And he cast four rings for the four ends of the grate of brass, *to be* places for the staves. And he made the staves  
6 *of* shittim wood, and overlaid them with brass. And he put the staves into the rings on the sides of the altar, to bear it  
7 withal; he made the altar hollow with boards.

8 And he made the laver *of* brass, and the foot of it *of* brass, of the looking-glasses of *the women* assembling, which assembled *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

The Court and its contents, with an open-air transaction (xxxviii.).  
1. *Contents of the Court* (1-8). (1) The Altar of Burnt-offering (1-7). Rawlinson, who no doubt knows English, prefers the *pots* in ver. 3 to the *pans* in xxvii. 3; and intimates that the thing intended is "buckets or scuttles to convey the ashes from the altar to the ash-heap" (Lev. i. 16). (2) The Laver. 8. Here we come upon the interesting fact that the women who gave up their looking-glasses were those "which assembled at the door of the tent of meeting" (not Tabernacle of the congregation). They presumably were devout like Anna, and those who looked for redemption in Israel (Lu. ii. 36). The Dwelling, which was distant from them only the 5 cubits' breadth of the tent verandah, was quite open at the end, excepting the door curtain, which needed only to be drawn up or aside to enable them to see into the Holy Place, with the candlestick on its one side (their left) and the shewbread on the opposite side (their right); while beyond both, in

9 And he made the court: on the south side southward, the hangings of the court *were of* fine twined linen, an hundred  
 10 cubits: their pillars *were* twenty, and their brazen sockets twenty; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *were of* silver.  
 11 And for the north side *the hangings were* an hundred cubits, their pillars *were* twenty, and their sockets of *brass* twenty:  
 12 the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *of* silver. And for the west side *were* hangings of fifty cubits, their pillars ten, and their sockets ten: the hooks of the pillars and their  
 13 fillets *of* silver. And for the east side eastward, fifty cubits.  
 14 The hangings of the one side *of the gate were* fifteen cubits, 15 their pillars three, and their sockets three. And for the other side of the court gate, on this hand and that hand, *were* hangings of fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their  
 16 sockets three. All the hangings of the court round about 17 *were of* fine twined linen: and the sockets for the pillars *were of* brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *of* silver; and the overlaying of their chapters *of* silver: and all  
 18 the pillars of the court *were* filleted with silver. And the hanging for the gate of the court *was* needlework, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; and twenty cubits *was* the length, and the height in the breadth *was* five  
 19 cubits, answerable to the hangings of the court. And their pillars *were* four, and their sockets *of* brass four; their hooks *of* silver, and the overlaying of their chapters and their fillets  
 20 *of* silver. And all the pins of the tabernacle, and of the court round about, *were of* brass.

front of the (second) veil, was the Altar of Incense. 9-20. On the way into the Holiest. 2. *The Court itself* (9-20). "The height in the breadth was 5 cubits, answerable to the hangings of the Court" (ver. 18). The "breadth" (of the web) of cloth employed was 5 cubits. The Court's curtains consequently consisted of squares of 5 cubits by 5. And the curtain of the Court gate was of the same height, as measured by a "breadth" of that cloth. 3. *The transaction.* It was a valuation of the precious metals employed as material of the Tabernacle. The subject has been wrought out with care by the master-hand of Canon Cook. As for standard of weight, he makes out the shekel to have weighed about 220 English grains, of value about 2s. 7d.; and the talent of (vers. 25, 28) 3000 shekels, thus to have been about 94 $\frac{2}{7}$  lbs. avoidupois (the Greek talent was only about 82 lbs.). His results as to the respective amounts of the various metals employed are as follows:—

Gold	1 ton	4 cwt.	2 qrs.	13 lbs.
Silver	4 "	4 "	2 "	20 "
Bronze	2 "	19 "	2 "	11 "

He states that the value of the gold if pure would in our money be

21 This is the sum of the tabernacle, *even* of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, *for* the service of the Levites, by the hand of  
 22 Ithamar, son to Aaron the priest. And Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the  
 23 Lord commanded Moses. And with him *was* Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in  
 24 scarlet, and fine linen. All the gold that was occupied for the work in all the work of the holy *place*, even the gold of the offering, was twenty and nine talents, and seven hundred  
 25 and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary. And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation *was* an hundred talents, and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels, after the shekel of the  
 26 sanctuary: a bekah for every man, *that is*, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred thousand, and three thousand and five hundred and

£175,075, 13s.; and of the silver £38,034, 15s. 10d. The cost of the bronze and of other material, along with the value of the skilled workmanship, might bring the whole up toward £250,000.

NOTE on the question: Is it likely that Israelites in the wilderness should have been able and willing to lay out so great a sum on a tent of meeting? We answer, No; it is in the last degree unlikely: almost as unlikely as that they should pass through the Red Sea as on dry ground. And the fact of their having done that most unlikely thing we regard as a proof of supernatural redemption: it is thus explained, while "it is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes." The *fact* is historical: is there any other explanation of it?

21. On this occasion the Levites are seen ministering before we hear of any formal consecration of the tribe. They thus are like the evening star, which to a child appears to have come into view, as if unduly, before startime. In reality the stars have been coming into view, though they are not in our dull sight, all the afternoon. And this matter of the Levites and of the Levitical priesthood, may have been quietly growing into ripeness for manifestation, partly through natural fitness and partly through supernatural qualification and call, in ways not known to us, nor perhaps to Moses, and even perhaps not surmised by themselves. We observe that of the sons of Aaron it is Ithamar that heads the work on this occasion. Nadab and Abihu are his seniors: is their absence now premonitory of an awful doom, showing that a man's being an apostle in his office would not save him from being a castaway in his person? (1 Co. ix. 27). 22, 23 reads like a formal discharge to the two masters of works, as having been faithful in their office. Bezaleel is here quite unquestionably made the chief. 24. *Gold*, in that early period, though always most precious, existed in larger *proportion* to silver than in the later ages. This does not include the silver that was given

27 fifty *men*. And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the vail; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket  
 28 And of the thousand seven hundred seventy and five *shekels* he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their chapiters, and filleted them. And the brass of the offering *was* seventy  
 29 talents, and two thousand and four hundred shekels. And therewith he made the sockets to the door of the tabernacle  
 30 of the congregation, and the brazen altar, and the brazen grate for it, and all the vessels of the altar, and the sockets  
 31 of the court round about, and the sockets of the court gate, and all the pins of the tabernacle, and all the pins of the court round about.

CHAP. XXXIX. I. And of the blue, and purple, and scarlet, they made cloths of service, to do service in the holy *place*, and made the holy garments for Aaron; as the Lord commanded Moses. And he made the ephod *of* gold, blue, and  
 2 purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut *it into* wires, to work  
 3 *it* in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, *with* cunning work. They made shoulder-pieces for it, to couple *it* together: by the two edges was it  
 4 coupled together. And the curious girdle of his ephod, that *was* upon it, *was* of the same, according to the work thereof; *of* gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen; as the Lord commanded Moses.

6 And they wrought onyx stones enclosed in ouches of gold, graven, as signets are graven, with the names of the children  
 7 of Israel. And he put them on the shoulders of the ephod, *that they should be* stones for a memorial to the children of Israel; as the Lord commanded Moses.

8 And he made the breastplate *of* cunning work, like the work of the ephod; *of* gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet,

in free-will offering (xxxv. 24). 25. The census number here (xxx. 12) is exactly what it was (Nu. i.) six months later in another census, though from that later census were wanting 22,000 Levites. On the present occasion the census may have been only a rough counting of heads, for checking the account of the half-shekel tribute. Rawlinson suggests that the exact number ascertained at the later census may have been inserted here for the purpose of showing the exact state of Israelitish population at the time. In fact we do not know how this matter came to be as it is.

The finishing touches (xxxix.). I. As to the *priestly garments* (1-13) hardly anything falls to be noted here and now. *The elevation* of the plate



9 and fine twined linen. It was foursquare ; they made the  
 breastplate double : a span *was* the length thereof, and a  
 10 span the breadth thereof, *being* doubled. And they set in it  
 four rows of stones ; *the first row was* a sardius, a topaz, and  
 11 a carbuncle : this *was* the first row. And the second row,  
 12 an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row,  
 13 a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row, a  
 beryl, an onyx, and a jasper : *they were* enclosed in ouches of  
 14 gold in their enclosings. And the stones *were* according to  
 the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their  
 names, *like* the engravings of a signet, every one with his  
 15 name, according to the twelve tribes. And they made upon  
 the breastplate chains at the ends, *of* wreathen work *of* pure  
 16 gold. And they made two ouches *of* gold, and two gold  
 rings, and put the two rings in the two ends of the breast-  
 17 plate. And they put the two wreathen chains of gold in the  
 18 two rings on the ends of the breastplate. And the two ends  
 of the two wreathen chains they fastened in the two ouches,  
 and put them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, before it.  
 19 And they made two rings of gold, and put *them* on the two  
 ends of the breastplate, upon the border of it, which *was* on  
 20 the side of the ephod inward. And they made two *other*  
 golden rings, and put them on the two sides of the ephod  
 underneath, toward the forepart of it, over against the *other*  
 coupling thereof, above the curious girdle of the ephod.  
 21 And they did bind the breastplate by his rings unto the rings  
 of the ephod with a lace of blue, that it might be above  
 the curious girdle of the ephod, and that the breastplate  
 might not be loosed from the ephod ; as the Lord commanded  
 Moses.

22 And he made the robe of the ephod *of* woven work, all *of*  
 23 blue. And *there was* an hole in the midst of the robe, as the  
 hole of an habergeon, *with* a band round about the hole, that  
 24 it should not rend. And they made upon the hems of the  
 robe pomegranates *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, *and*  
 25 twined *linen*. And they made bells *of* pure gold, and put the

(note under xviii. 36-38) on the mitre is not specified until now. And now we have *fine twined linen* (ver. 29) instead of *linen work* in xxviii. 39. 2. *Bringing the finished work to Moses*. Here, ver. 42 (cp. ver. 31), there is emphasis of iteration given to the fact that Israel did this work *according to all that the Lord commanded Moses*. They not only did what was right in itself, according to the best of their judgment, they did precisely what God had commanded, through His minister, in the manner which He had pre-

bells between the pomegranates, upon the hem of the robe,  
26 round about between the pomegranates : a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate, round about the hem of the robe to minister *in* ; as the Lord commanded Moses.

27 And they made coats *of* fine linen, *of* woven work, for Aaron,  
28 and for his sons ; and a mitre *of* fine linen, and goodly bonnets  
29 *of* fine linen, and linen breeches *of* fine twined linen ; and a  
girdle *of* fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet,  
*of* needlework ; as the Lord commanded Moses.

30 And they made the plate of the holy crown *of* pure gold,  
and wrote upon it a writing, *like to* the engravings of a signet,  
31 HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And they tied unto it a  
lace of blue, to fasten *it* on high upon the mitre ; as the Lord  
commanded Moses.

32 Thus was all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of the  
congregation finished : and the children of Israel did accord-  
ing to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did they.

33 And they brought the tabernacle unto Moses, the tent and  
all his furniture, his taches, his boards, his bars, and his  
34 pillars, and his sockets ; and the covering of rams' skins dyed  
red, and the covering of badgers' skins, and the vail of the  
35 covering ; the ark of the testimony, and the staves thereof,  
36 and the mercy-seat ; the table, *and* all the vessels thereof, and  
37 the shewbread ; the pure candlestick, *with* the lamps thereof,  
*even with* the lamps to be set in order, and all the vessels  
38 thereof, and the oil for light ; and the golden altar, and the  
anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the hanging for the  
39 tabernacle door ; the brazen altar, and his grate *of* brass, his  
40 staves, and all his vessels ; the laver and his foot ; the hangings  
of the court, his pillars, and his sockets, and the hanging for  
the court gate, his cords, and his pins, and all the vessels of  
the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of the congregation ;  
41 the clothes of service to do service in the holy *place* ; and the  
holy garments for Aaron the priest, and his sons' garments,  
42 to minister in the priest's office. According to all that the  
Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all

scribed. *That* was their work ; not merely the matter of labour, but the spirit of serving God, which makes work to be worship. And the service *was wholly through the mediator*. At the same time, Moses was a man in touch with the manhood of his brethren. There is something peculiarly fine in the manner of his parting from them on this occasion. Working-men almost anywhere in Christendom would be startled if on pay-night their employer were to pronounce the benediction at the parting. Yet Boaz had a

43 the work. And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them.

CHAP. XL. 1, 2. And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou set up the tabernacle of  
 3 the tent of the congregation; and thou shalt put therein the  
 4 ark of the testimony, and cover the ark with the vail. And thou shalt bring in the table, and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it; and thou shalt bring in the  
 5 candlestick, and light the lamps thereof. And thou shalt set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony, and put the hanging of the door to the tabernacle.  
 6 And thou shalt set the altar of the burnt-offering before the

benediction for his reapers in the field. And his people answered with a benediction to their master; showing a condition very different from that disclosed by the wail of the Egyptian song of the labourer (see Introd. Ch. II.). And no doubt, through Moses and the prophets, Christ and the apostles, there is coming into realization that happiness of toil, "Ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing" (1 Pe. iii. 9). Finally, the Moral Law has a blessing for those who obey it.

XL. *Finis coronat opus!* "So Moses finished the work." It is difficult to judge how far the expression may represent a sigh of relief or a species of judicial declaration, as (Jn. xvii. 4) on the part of the greater mediator. Did he realize the greatness of this thing? (1 Pe. i. 11, cp. Is. liiii. 1, 2). It was only a sort of picture, which a child can reproduce with a piece of white paper. Yet in it he had sowed the true seed of the regeneration of the world. For that picture was a hieroglyphic of the thought (Jn. i. 1) which, now made clear and distinct (He. i. 1), has been the making of Christendom by the power of Him who first brought the worlds into being (Jn. i. 14, 3). That pretty little thing, amid nature so wild in her solitude, is already, among those coarse and sensual Asiatics, beginning to be an operative principle of order and moral beauty; it is a nucleus of organization for the great movement of the kingdom of God among men.

*On—month.* This was within a fortnight of two years after the first Passover. It is calculated that of that time six months may have been available for building the Tabernacle. And a "scholar" decrees that that time would not suffice. Perhaps he thinks that the linen and wool had to grow, or that the gold and silver had to be dug up. Otherwise a common person might think that a million of pairs of hands—male and female—might in six months' time be able to build a Pithom or a Rameses of Tabernacles; for apparently they were in the mood recommended by another tent-maker,— "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." 3-8. *The testimony*: that is, the Moral Law, giving its name to everything; for still,

- 7 door of the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. And  
 8 thou shalt set the laver between the tent of the congregation  
 9 and the altar, and shalt put water therein. And thou shalt  
 10 set up the court round about, and hang up the hanging at the  
 11 court gate. And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint  
 12 the tabernacle, and all that *is* therein, and shalt hallow it, and  
 13 all the vessels thereof: and it shall be holy. And thou shalt  
 14 anoint the altar of the burnt-offering, and all his vessels, and  
 15 sanctify the altar: and it shall be an altar most holy.  
 16 And thou shalt anoint the laver and his foot, and sanctify it.  
 17 And thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the  
 tabernacle of the congregation, and wash them with water.  
 18 And thou shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint  
 19 him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the  
 20 priest's office. And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe  
 21 them with coats: and thou shalt anoint them, as thou didst  
 22 anoint their father, that they may minister unto me in the  
 23 priest's office: for their anointing shall surely be an ever-  
 24 lasting priesthood throughout their generations. Thus did  
 25 Moses: according to all that the Lord commanded him, so  
 26 did he.  
 27 And it came to pass in the first month, in the second year,

*denominatio fit a majori*; and "the greatest of these is charity," and "the fulfilling of the law is love." *Before the ark of the testimony*: that is, at a distance of, say 9 cubits. The expression in xxx. 6 is, *before the testimony*, which thus may mean, at such a distance from it. But *that* ("before the testimony") is the expression in xvi. 34 in reference to the pot of manna, and in Nu. xvii. 10 in reference to Aaron's rod that blossomed. Here then is proof that these two things were originally deposited before the ark, not inside of the ark, but in front of it, somewhere between it and the veil. About He. ix. 4 see under ver. 20. 9-16. When the things are so placed, they are "anointed." Remembering that "Christ" is the Greek for *anointed*, we may say that they were "christened" (cp. 1 Co. x. 2). That wonderful christening extended to (1) the Tabernacle and its contents; (2) the Court and its contents; and (3) the priestly family for all time—that is, the whole House of Israel through its representatives. This *Chrim*, the "Baptism of Repentance," thus reached all, like the "Baptism of Remission" (xxiv. 6-8), at the sealing of the Covenant, extended to everything and all within the Covenant bounds. The mediator still discharges priestly functions. The consecration of the Aaronic priesthood thus has not yet come into full effect: the ship is built and afloat, but is only being towed out into the open sea. *An everlasting priesthood*, is one whose duration has no end within the system of things in question. From another point of view (He. vii.) the Aaronic priesthood is a symbol of evanescence, of shadows making way for the true abiding substance. 17-19. This is the first appearance of the fabric in realization before

on the first *day* of the month, *that* the tabernacle was reared  
 18 up. And Moses reared up the tabernacle, and fastened his  
 sockets, and set up the boards thereof, and put in the bars  
 19 thereof, and reared up his pillars. And he spread abroad the  
 tent over the tabernacle, and put the covering of the tent  
 above upon it; as the Lord commanded Moses.

20 And he took and put the testimony into the ark, and set  
 the staves in the ark, and put the mercy-seat above upon the  
 21 ark. And he brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up  
 the vail of the covering, and covered the ark of the testimony;  
 as the Lord commanded Moses.

22 And he put the table in the tent of the congregation, upon  
 the side of the tabernacle northward, without the vail.

23 And he set the bread in order upon it before the Lord; as  
 the Lord had commanded Moses.

24 And he put the candlestick in the tent of the congregation,  
 over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle south-  
 25 ward. And he lighted the lamps before the Lord; as the  
 Lord commanded Moses.

26 And he put the golden altar in the tent of the congregation  
 27 before the vail: and he burnt sweet incense thereon; as the  
 Lord commanded Moses.

28 And he set up the hanging *at* the door of the tabernacle.  
 29 And he put the altar of burnt-offering *by* the door of the

men. *Moses reared up*, etc. : *qui facit per alium facit per se*; he no doubt had others for his "hands;" e.g. in placing the great cloth. Here, once more, our translators *have* to say "tent" where they so often have wrongly said "tabernacle," in the rendering of *ohel*; because here they need "tabernacle" for the rendering of "the *mishkan*" (Dwelling). And, 20, here once more we see, from the manner of speaking, that the Kappōreth ("mercy-seat") is not a mere lid of the ark, but that, rather, the ark is a prepared base for the Kappōreth. *The testimony into the ark.* In He. ix. 4 we read that there were in it also the Pot of Manna and Aaron's rod that blossomed. But we have seen (under vers. 3-8) that these two things were originally placed outside of the ark, in front of it. In Solomon's time (1 Ki. viii. 9; 2 Chron. v. 10) nothing was found inside of it but the Decalogue. Their place may, so to speak, *ideally* have been within the ark, and at some time they may have really been within it. But the general fact is, that they were not within it as the Testimony was. And this makes all the more commandingly impressive the place of glorious solitariness occupied by the Moral Law, in the heart of the heart's heart of that most glorious revelation of redeeming grace. As often as true-hearted Israelites thought of the "exceeding riches of that grace," they were able to exult in their hearts and to say, "Sing unto Jehovah, O ye holy ones of His; and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness." (For other aspects of the history of the ark and its accompaniments, see Introd. p. 90.) 25. These lamps, now first burning in time,



tabernacle of the tent of the congregation, and offered upon it the burnt-offering, and the meat-offering; as the Lord commanded Moses.

- 30 And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation  
 31 and the altar, and put water there, to wash *withal*. And  
 Moses, and Aaron, and his sons, washed their hands and their  
 32 feet thereat. When they went into the tent of the congrega-  
 tion, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed;  
 33 as the Lord commanded Moses. And he reared up the court  
 round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the  
 hanging of the court gate: so Moses finished the work.  
 34 Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the  
 35 glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not  
 able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the  
 cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the  
 36 tabernacle. And when the cloud was taken up from over the  
 tabernacle, the children of Israel went onward in all their

will outlast the sun, and shine for ever (Re. i. 16). 32. AS THE LORD COMMANDED MOSES: observe in this concluding section how this formula, at every step in the uprearing of the fabric, from the first and on to the last, comes in as a solemn refrain (ver. 16), "Thus did Moses: according to all that the Lord commanded him, so did he." We have seen the prescription faithfully recorded and obeyed throughout the previous work. Yet some make a religious merit of doing as Moses did *excepting* in this one respect, that the Lord has not commanded them, as He commanded Moses; but, quite differently, has commanded them (2 Co. iii. 13-18) to take off that veil, which He commanded Moses to put on. 29-33. The first offering on that altar. And the prescription is taking the first step toward a habit in outward form which will come to be a habit of true inward life on the part of those who have a spiritual mind (1 Co. ii. 12), "I will wash mine hands in innocency: so will I compass Thine altar, O Jehovah" (Ps. xxvi. 6). 34-38. At ver. 34 we see, what had previously appeared on Sinai mount, the cloud enveloping the central glory of the Presence. As Moses then did not go up to the mount without being distinctly called up, so now he may not enter the Tabernacle within the cloud. And therein we may perceive the habitual normal condition; as compared, *e.g.*, with his everyday familiarity of entrance at the period of the days of mourning, when there was that urgency of vital need of intercession. Such familiarity, called for in a time of crisis, may not be allowed to a *servant* (He. iii. 5) as habitual use and wont (cp. Jn. i. 18; 1 Jn. ii. 2).

36-38. These words, like those in xvi. 35 (note on "Jehovah-nissi," initial to xiii.), may have been written thirty-eight years after the completion of the history as a whole. The condition they describe is that of a nomadic warrior nation in the desert. Along with the commander there is carried a brazier of fire. Through the day-time,

37 journeys : but if the cloud were not taken up, then they  
 38 journeyed not till the day that it was taken up. For the  
 cloud of the Lord *was* upon the tabernacle by day, and fire  
 was on it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel,  
 throughout all their journeys.

in the pure atmosphere of the desert, the ascending column of  
 smoke is visible from a vast distance ; so that no true follower of  
 that leader need be lost. In the night-time the same office, of  
 banner conspicuous from afar, is filled by the flame of the fire.  
 And when the people halted, they "sat under His shadow with  
 great delight." The cloud, ascending as a column, spread over the  
 camp as a canopy of cloud, overshadowing Israel as the cherubim  
 overshadowed the Kappōreth with their wings. So the children of  
 Jacob were made to see, like the patriarchs, in their journeyings  
 continually, "This is the House of God ; this is the gate of heaven"

O God of Bethel ! by whose hand  
 Thy people still are fed ;  
 Who through this weary pilgrimage  
 Hast all our fathers led :

Our vows, our pray'rs, we now present  
 Before Thy throne of grace :  
 God of our fathers ! be the God  
 Of their succeeding race.

## A P P E N D I X.

### NOTES ON THE TABERNACLE.

By the Rev. WILLIAM GILLIES, Timaru, N.Z.

I. PILLARS OF THE COURT.—As the curtains for the outside enclosure were to be made 100 cubits for the length and 50 cubits for the breadth, these determine the space within which the 20 pillars for each side, and the 10 pillars for each end, had to be placed. Of these pillars no dimensions are given, but their height and breadth and thickness may be arrived at thus: The curtains were 5 cubits high; the pillars supporting them must therefore have been 5 cubits plus the tenons which went into the bottom block of brass, and the projection of the pillars above the curtains, over which was slipped down the silver cap. Allowing  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a cubit each for tenon and projection, the full length of the pillars, when out of their mortices, would be  $5\frac{1}{2}$  cubits. The silver caps must necessarily have been made to slip off and on the top of the pillars, to prevent damage in carriage, and without them the pillars would all lie flat and solid on the waggons provided for their carriage. These silver caps would be made with four rings, one on each side, two for fastening the inside and outside cords, forming the stays fastened at their other ends to the brass pins driven into the ground, and keeping the pillars steady in these directions. The other two rings would be for the silver rods to link into, which connected the pillars, and on which the curtains were hung. These would be placed at the outer corners, so that the rods and the outside of the pillars would be in line for the straight hanging of the curtains. The arrangement of rings on the caps may be shown thus,—



Diagram No. 1.

These silver caps would be carefully carried by themselves, and not being such as would pack closely, would in bulk make up a

number of loads for the sons of Merari. The thickness of the pillars is determined thus: There were 20 pillars in the length of 100 cubits, which would make 19 spaces. These spaces were 5 cubits high, and the probability is that the breadth was the same, showing inside a square of 5 cubits of the white curtain; 19 spaces of 5 cubits = 95 cubits, leaving 5 cubits of the whole length to be taken up by the thickness of the 20 pillars, or each pillar  $\frac{1}{4}$  cubit thick. Then as to the breadth of the pillars: this dimension is arrived at from the end measurements. Here there were 10 pillars, which would make 9 spaces of 5 cubits = 45 cubits, with thickness of 10 pillars at  $\frac{1}{4}$  cubit =  $47\frac{1}{2}$  cubits, leaving  $2\frac{1}{2}$  cubits to be accounted for out of the 50 cubits in breadth. But it is obvious that the first pillar at the end could not be right in the corner, as the last one of the side stood there. And as each pillar at side and end stood in a block of brass, the first pillar at the end must have been away from the corner, the breadth of the side pillar with the length of the projection of bottom block, and the side projection of its own block. For these three we have  $1\frac{1}{4}$  cubits, divided thus: breadth of pillar  $\frac{1}{2}$  cubit, end projection of block  $\frac{1}{2}$  cubit, and side projection of end pillar block  $\frac{1}{4}$  cubit. The curtained enclosure would thus show on the inside 19 squares of white on each side, divided by the pillars of  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a cubit in breadth and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a cubit in thickness; and 9 squares in the end, similarly divided, with a strip of white equal to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a square in each corner between the last side and the first end pillar. The bottom blocks of metal, into which the pillars were morticed, would measure  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cubits long by  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cubit broad and  $\frac{1}{4}$  thick, making a good solid rest.

2. THE GATE CURTAIN.—At the eastern end, where the entrance was, the arrangement of the pillars would be the same as at the western end. The curtain, however, was in three divisions. From each corner the white curtain extended 15 cubits and its pillars 3, and the figured curtain in the centre 20 cubits and its pillars 4. The white curtain would extend 3 cubits beyond its third pillar, and the figured curtain or hanging for the door—figured only on the outside, but white on the inside—would extend over its four pillars, and 2 cubits beyond its first and fourth, thus meeting the curtain from each corner, not over or by the side of a pillar, but 2 cubits away from a pillar, thus leaving a convenient small lap of the curtain to be moved aside for persons passing to and fro. The whole gate curtain was drawn up only on special occasions, and then the end curtain would present the appearance of three 5-cubit spaces, flanked by two small side spaces of 2 cubits; and when the whole

curtain was not drawn up, the lap of the two small side spaces could easily be drawn aside for ingress and egress, with probably an attendant Levite acting as doorkeeper at each, to draw the curtain aside. So in 1 Chron. ix. 19, in connexion with the arrangements of the Tabernacle in the times of David, we read that the Korahites were "keepers of the gates of the Tabernacle." And so in that psalm of the sons of Korah, the 84th, though written probably in the days of the Temple, we have, in the tenth verse, the declared choice of the pious among them of the humblest office in connexion with God's house, assigned to them from the days of the wilderness, as bringing greater privilege and honour than the enjoyment of selfish indulgence away from the service of God,—“I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness.”

3. THE TABERNACLE COLOURS.—The gate curtain was to be embroidered with blue and purple and scarlet. This embroidery work would be on the outside, leaving the curtains white on the inside. These three colours meet us everywhere in the Tabernacle, and had evidently a symbolic meaning. The blue, the sky colour, is expressive of peace. The purple, the royal colour, is expressive of sovereignty, and so of grace. The scarlet, the blood colour, is expressive of atonement, and so of mercy. Thus seen on the gate curtain, they spoke out their abiding salutation to every worshipper drawing near,—“Peace, grace, and mercy unto you from Him whose dwelling this is.” That salutation, shining out from, and resting on the white ground of holiness, is the original of the apostolic epistolary salutation, “Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.”

4. THE TABERNACLE WAS STRONG.—Passing in to the Tabernacle proper, that was a structure very different in its massive strength from what is generally supposed. It is a great mistake to speak of it as “the frail Tabernacle.” It was anything but a frail structure. And as it was a symbol of the person of Christ, the idea of strength in relation to Him is a most important one. “Our help is laid on one mighty to save.” His humanity was sinless, and so was without that element of frailty, working on to natural dissolution, which sin has introduced into ours. That humanity was further strengthened by its union to the divinity. And so, when it came to the taking down of that tabernacle, that was not accomplished without a measure of violence and an intensity of suffering far beyond anything which our frail humanity could have endured.

5. THE BOARDS OF IT REALLY SOLID PLANKS.—The dimensions



of the Tabernacle were 30 cubits long, 10 cubits broad, and 10 cubits high. Each side was to consist of twenty boards of acacia wood,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cubits broad, but the thickness is not stated. Is there any means of determining that? I think there is. And first let us look at the word *boards* as used in reference to the walls. In the A.V. the same word is used in reference to the altar, Ex. xxvii. 8, and the walls of the Tabernacle, xxxvi. 20. They are, however, different words in the Hebrew, and the difference is marked in the R.V. by translating the first one "planks," leaving the second one "boards." Had the Revisers been better acquainted with the timber trade, they would just have reversed these two. Webster, in his *Dictionary*, rightly defines a board as "a piece of timber sawed thin and broad," and a plank, "a broad *thick* board." The box called the altar was made of boards, the walls of the Tabernacle of planks. The word used in reference to the walls is used in reference to no other structure in the Old Testament save once, in Ezek. xxvii. 6, in describing the ships of Tyre, where the Revisers have left the translation of the A.V. as it was, "benches." The benches were evidently the strong cross-beams, and are said to have been of ivory, equal to ours—say of iron, as indication of great strength. These benches were beams, and the wall planks of the Tabernacle were beams also, and their exact measurement can be determined. The western end was to be made of six planks and two corner ones. Now six planks of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cubits broad would not fill up the breadth of 10 cubits—they would fall short by one cubit. And the two corner ones added would make 10 cubits and 2 cubits over. Accordingly the placing of these two corner planks has been a great perplexity to reconstructors. They have been put in upon the angle by some, destroying the perfect cube of the Holy of Holies. They have been split up the centre and doubled round, as a clamp on the side-wall, by others. And so on. The whole difficulty arising from the idea of its having been a frail structure of thin boards. But does not this excess of breadth over the 10 cubits of the inside measurement point to an allowance made for the thickness of the planks of the side-walls, and the bars running through the rings outside the planks?—the bars probably (at least the middle one, which passed through the midst of the planks from the one end to the other) morticing into the projections of the end, and thus keeping firmly together the sides and the end. Allowing  $\frac{1}{2}$  cubit for the thickness of the planks, the *outside* measurement of the Tabernacle over the walls in breadth would be 11 cubits. That 10 cubits was the *inside*, is fixed by the requirement that the

length and breadth and height of the inner chambers were to be equal, forming a perfect cube. Thus 11 cubits of the 12 covered by the eight boards would be taken up in bringing the end flush with the sides; the remaining cubit, being divided into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cubit projections at each side, for the side bars to butt against, or be morticed into, as the case might be. Thus the walls of the Tabernacle proper and the walls of the outer enclosure were virtually of the same thickness; the pillars giving the virtual thickness of the outer wall, and being in breadth what the planks were in thickness,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cubit.

6. THE SOCKETS OF THOSE PLANK-BOARDS.—Each wall plank rested on two sockets and plates of silver, which would actually be of no great thickness, but which would be of sufficient length to project somewhat beyond the walls both outside and inside, forming supports keeping the planks in position until the connecting bars were run through the rings. No

dimensions of these blocks are given, but we may arrive at them thus:—The end socket of the last plank on the side would require to get in between the two sockets of the first plank of the end, which gives  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cubits for the breadth of two sockets and the length of one; or breadth of each  $\frac{1}{4}$  cubit and length of one 1 cubit. Each socket would thus project  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a cubit inside and outside of the wall planks. The arrangements

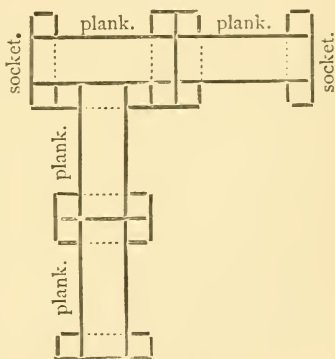


Diagram No. 2.

of sockets supporting the wall planks, and how they would fit in at the corners, is shown in the accompanying diagram,—two planks with their sockets of the side-wall, and two of the end, being represented. After I had arrived as above at the thickness of the planks, I found that Josephus mentions  $\frac{1}{2}$  cubit as their thickness; which has generally been passed over, or set aside as one of his exaggerations. (I do not refer to the overlaying with gold, as I am simply presenting points in which I differ from others who have attempted to construct models of the building from the data given in the Scripture record.)

7. THE TABERNACLE CURTAINS.—We come now to the curtains connected with the Tabernacle proper. Of these there were four

sets ; and most frequently they are represented as just one laid upon the top of the other, across the top and down the sides of the wooden part of the Tabernacle, the whole presenting the appearance of an oblong flat-roofed structure, with only two of the sets of curtains at all visible, the lower one inside the building, and the upper one outside. That arrangement does not seem to be in accordance with the directions given to, and the work as carried out by Moses. In Ex. xxvi. 1, we have the command of God, "Thou shalt make the Tabernacle with ten curtains ;" and in xxxvi. 8 we are told that "the wise-hearted among them that wrought the work made the Tabernacle with ten curtains" (R.V.). The Tabernacle proper was thus really made *with* these ten curtains. The plank structure which we have already discussed is said in xxvi. 15 and xxxvi. 20 to be "*for* the Tabernacle ;" that is to say, a strong surrounding for the Tabernacle of curtains. That is a point of some importance, as it fixes the hanging of these ten curtains inside the plank structure, forming the walls and roof of the Tabernacle proper.

Being 28 cubits long, they would reach across the roof 10 cubits, and down each side wall 9 cubits, or within 1 cubit of the ground. Then each curtain being 4 cubits broad, joined together they would cover 40 cubits. That would allow 9 cubits to hang down at the western end, making it the same as the sides, leaving 30 cubits to cover the length of the structure, with 1 cubit of a hanging, over the pillars at the eastern end, from which hung a special entrance curtain. These curtains were of fine twined linen, and blue and purple and scarlet with cherubim.

8. THE VEIL OF THE MOST HOLY PLACE.—The dividing veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies was of similar material and workmanship, and was hung on the Holy of Holies side of the pillars between the two apartments ; as is fixed by the prohibition that none should enter within that veil, or look upon the ark and its mercy-seat, save the High Priest on the Great Day of Atonement ; and the consequent regulation (see Num. iv. 5), that when the Tabernacle had to be taken down, the first thing done was the approach of Aaron and his sons to the veil, and unhooking of the pillars ; for which purpose they must have used rods. Thus carrying it aloft before them they advanced toward the ark, and let it fall over that sacred piece of furniture, covering it and wrapping it up without looking upon it. In like manner when the Tabernacle was set up, they would lift the veil on their rods, and carrying it aloft would walk backwards till they reached the pillars, and hung it in its place. The

interior of the Holy of Holies would thus be all of fine linen, with its blue and purple and scarlet and cherubic embroidery, with 1 cubit of the gold-covered boards showing all round at the foot as a wainscot; and in each corner, or either side of the ark, the excess length of the curtain, caused by its folding down the walls, would hang as a drapery. The Holy Place would have a similar appearance; only the dividing pillars at one end, and the entrance pillars at the other end, would show in front of the curtains. The outside door curtain would be hung on the outside of the pillars to prevent it being blown inward upon the Candlestick and Table of Shewbread.

9. THE GOATS'-HAIR TENT—ITS FORM.—The second set of curtains mentioned were to be of goats' hair, eleven in number, 30 cubits long, and each 4 cubits broad. The use to be made of these curtains is entirely obscured by the mistranslations of the A.V.; but the corrections of the Revised Version make it plain and unmistakable. In the A.V. they are said to be "a covering upon the Tabernacle," Ex. xxvi. 7; but in the R.V., "for a tent over the Tabernacle." So throughout the R.V. makes plain this distinction between the Tabernacle and the tent *over* the Tabernacle. James Fergusson, Esq., Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, in his article on "The Temple" in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, argues in favour of "the tent over the Tabernacle;" but he has prejudiced the case against himself by supposing the necessity of a ridge-pole 5 feet long, and finding that in the middle bar said to extend from end to end of the planks, and in placing the five pillars at the entrance of the tent and not of the Tabernacle, and making them of unequal height; as also by supposing the middle plank of the end to have stood up 5 cubits higher than its fellows, to give a support at that end for the ridge-pole. As an architect he was evidently more familiar with the erection of permanent structures and their requirements than with tents and their simple arrangements.

Readers of the R.V. will be compelled to accept the idea of "a tent over the Tabernacle," which requirement will not be met by throwing these curtains over the Tabernacle as "a pall is thrown over a coffin." The goats'-hair curtains are distinctly stated to be "for a tent over the Tabernacle," their number and size being given. That no detailed instructions as to tent-poles and ropes, etc., are given, is not to be wondered at, and creates no difficulty. A tent was no new and strange erection for a people that were mere dwellers in tents. They needed no revelation of pattern, or instruction as to requirements of one kind or other for its erection. A tent was an





round the Tabernacle underneath the tent, and the width of the tent would exactly correspond with the width of the outer gate. Then the rope pegs of the pillar of the outer enclosure being placed 5 cubits in from the pillars, there would be left of the full breadth of the enclosure a free space of 5 cubits on each side, between the pegs and ropes of the tent and the outer enclosure.

10. LENGTH OF THE TENT—PROBLEM OF THE WEST CORNERS.—Now as to the length of the tent,—that is determined by the combined breadth of the eleven curtains, making 44 cubits less one-half curtain for a hanging at the front, and the half curtain for a similar hanging at the back, as directed Ex. xxvi. 9, 12, giving as the length of the tent 40 cubits, or 10 cubits longer than the Tabernacle, and thus providing for the same breadth of covered verandah at each end as along the sides. The directions of the 9th verse are a little confused as translated both in the A.V. and the R.V. But Gesenius gives as the primary meaning of the verb translated “shall double,”—“divide equally,” “distribute;” “double” being a secondary meaning, evidently arising from the shortest way to divide equally being to double it: it is thus distributed into two equal parts. So taking the primary meaning of the verb in ver. 9, we might read, “and shall divide equally (or halve) the sixth curtain on the forefront,” which would thus leave ver. 12 to read consistently and clearly, “and the overhanging part that remaineth of the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that remaineth shall hang over the back of the Tabernacle.”

But, as we have already seen, the back wall of the Tabernacle measured over the walls not simply 10 cubits, being built of eight planks, each  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cubits broad. Does that not interfere with and upset the idea of a tent roof? these projecting corners would bulge out that roof at these points, and speedily chafe through the curtains. Yes, if provision had not been made to avoid these very things. This takes us back to direct attention to the peculiar way in which the end planks are mentioned. It is not stated that the end is to be constructed of eight planks, but of six planks and two corner ones. Then the two corner ones are specially described in Ex. xxvi. 24, “they shall be double beneath, and in like manner they shall be entire unto the top thereof unto one ring: thus shall it be for them both; they shall be for the two corners” (R.V.). That reading is not much more intelligible than the A.V., “they shall be coupled together beneath, and they shall be coupled together above the head of it unto one ring.” In the margin, however, we get hints as to a

more intelligible reading. Opposite the "coupled together" of the A.V., the "shall be double" of the R.V., we find Hebrew "twinned," and opposite "unto one ring" we have "the first ring." The verb in this verse is found in the O. T. only here and in the corresponding record of the making of these corner planks, xxxvi. 29, and twice in the Song of Songs, where it is translated "beareth" or "hath twins." And so I would read the verse, "they shall be twinned (exactly alike, that is, be of the same breadth) beneath, and exactly alike toward the top unto the first ring," *i.e.* the breadth equal at the bottom shall be so carried up as far as the first or topmost ring for the bars. And why not beyond that point? Because from that point the corner would be cut away on the slope, corresponding to the slope of the roof; and so there would be no projecting corner to bulge out or chafe the curtains, and the curtains would rest along, and be supported half-way down the slope of the roof by the wall planks. Had it not been for this difference in breadth from that point there would have been no need of their being mentioned or described separately from the other six; but because of this difference they were separated from their companions, and were themselves "twins."

II. THE SEAL-SKIN COVERING.—There remains but one other matter to be considered, and that is as to the coverings mentioned in Ex. xxvi. 14 and xxvi. 19. Moses was directed to make "a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering of seal-skins above," R.V. And then we read that he did so. Nothing further is said regarding them; and we can only suggest what is most probable in regard to their size and use. Being mentioned immediately after the goats'-hair curtains, and one of them being expressly mentioned to have been for the tent, the natural inference seems to be that they were just of the same dimensions as the tent curtains. They would then measure 30 cubits by 44. The covering of rams' skins dyed red was to be put over the tent. This would make a very thorough waterproof covering, and at the same time would make the roof more conspicuous, both by day under the light of the sun, and by night under the light of the pillar of fire resting over it. Seen from all the camp, it kept ever before the eyes of the people the blood colour, the symbol of atonement, silently preaching Christ crucified; and kept them ever mindful of the truth taught and declared, in the sprinkling of the blood of the slain lamb on the doorposts and lintels of their houses on that night on which the Egyptian first-born were slain, that they were a blood-bought and

blood-protected people. They passed out of Egypt under the shadow of that blood; and now around the Tabernacle they must camp under its shadow and shelter.

So much for the one covering; but what of the other? Concerning it we are simply told that it was to be of seal skins and "above;" but above what? Nowhere do we read of the coverings of the tent, but only of the covering. So it could hardly be intended that this should form a second covering above the other one. I take it, therefore, that as the one was a covering above the tent, the other was a covering above the Tabernacle. It would be thrown over the planks, reaching down on each side within a short distance of the ground, and covering also the end, forming a covering through which neither wind nor dust could penetrate into the Tabernacle, or shake the inside curtains.

12. THE WHOLE CURTAIN ARRANGEMENT.—The full arrangement of the curtains would thus be,—first, the fine linen embroidered ones hanging inside the plank walls of the Tabernacle; then the seal-skin curtains forming a covering over the top of these and the planks; then the goats'-hair curtains showing inside the tent; and then the ram skins dyed red showing outside. The goats'-hair curtain would thus be a lining to the ram skins, and prevent the skin side from being seen inside the tent. All of the curtains would thus be visible, and have their separate and definite use. The ram skins being dyed red, and the seal skins being of a purplish colour, it is natural to suppose that the goats' hair curtains would be dyed blue; and thus the three Tabernacle colours would be combined in these three sets, as they were also wrought into the fine linen sets. Visible at all times throughout the camp would be the scarlet roof with its proclamation of mercy; then underneath its shadow was the blue, proclaiming peace; and over the tabernacle was the purple, proclaiming grace,—Mercy and Peace resting upon Grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

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